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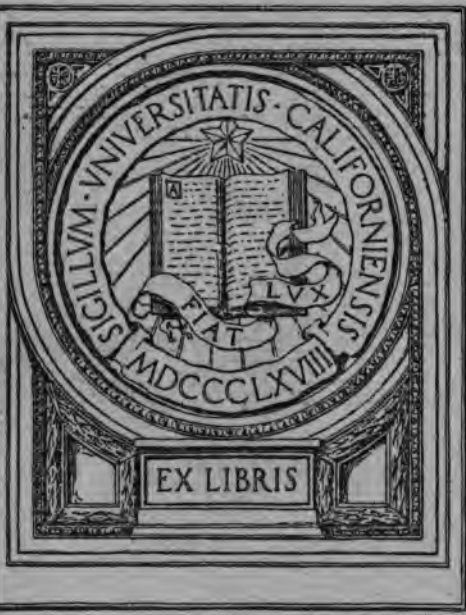
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To

Miss Hattie Emmons

From her friend

Lizzie Elson

San Luis Obispo

Sept 1877

HALF TINTS.

HALF TINTS:

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

TABLE D'HÔTE

AND

DRAWING-ROOM.

NEW YORK:
D. APPLETON & CO., 443 AND 445 BROADWAY.
1867.

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I.

COMMONPLACE.

HALF TINTS.

I.

COMMONPLACE.

JACK, my boy, will you give me your ears awhile? I feel an impulse to talk a little. And don't take offence at my familiar way. Remember that as John and man I've never known you.

Do you never rub your eyes and strain back to that long ago? Do your faculties never swim in remembrances of it? Do you never have periods of abstraction, when memories become actualities, and all sense for present things is suspended or inoperative?

To me they occur often, floating me off my feet and out of myself. No matter how busy or absorbing the situation, the exacting present is shut out, and the old time comes back, warm and radiant as our boyhood painted it. Only the other morning, hurrying through the thoroughfare of the great town, jostled by the crowd of active men with desperate purposes, I happened mechanically to glance down a side street to the tidal river, when I suddenly became as unconscious of the rush and roar as if staggering in a syncope. The water seemed actually to rise and blend with the sky, and the thronging vessels to be transmuted into clouds, transfigured, but retaining the essential lines and proportions of marine architecture. And the sun was shaded to soften the vision. The celestial fleet, floating sublimely as a great soul at rest, was freighted with the hopes and loves and ambitions of my youth, and chief amongst the radiant faces on the shining decks shone the lovely lineaments of one you remember with an ardor

next to my own. Mary still, but beatified, as Beatrice to Dante. And Eliza, her inseparable companion, as you were mine, stood by her side. How much, Jack, those beautiful, modest, bright girls were to us. I am sure that for years we never did a doubtful thing without a fear of their knowing it, and God knows how many ill things that guardian consciousness deterred us from. Last at night and first in the morning came thoughts of my little Mary, and pure they were as their subject. And with something of awe her presence inspired me. We never talked of the things always in our thoughts, and when happiest we talked not at all. That sweet baptism Motherwell describes as the silentness of joy, and Lowell more at large in his apostrophe:

> Oh, sweet Silence! They belied thee
> Who have called thee weak and vain;
> Speech is emptiness beside thee,
> Joy and woe have glorified thee;
> Love and longing never seek
> Any better way to speak.

Coherency at such times was as impossible as steadiness to palsy. The happiness her presence inspired composed my soul, cushioning the faculties like a sweet sleep. The tongue forgot its cunning. Separating from her, the magic thraldom would only too sensibly be felt, as the waking senses consciously disenchant themselves of the stuff that dreams are made of. You know the sensations well enough, repeated over and over again in your relations, present and absent, with Eliza, and repeated to every man with a man's heart, human enough for its best uses. Why, Jack, it did seem that I lost my conceit sometimes, so absorbed I was with her, elbowing myself perpetually, without a thought of sacrifice, by never-ceasing, ever-varying accommodations to her wishes and whims. If you do not remember, it is nevertheless a fact, that I learned to write her name before I could write my own. I never saw a very red glistening apple, nor a perfect, blushing, delicious peach, without growing sinfully covetous of it,

as a fitting little gift to her, so all-deserving. In the class I would deliberately misspell the word rather than go above her. I never saw a smooth beech-tree but I cut our initials upon it, never omitting to cut also a ring round them, that another might not get in. Never shall I forget the pretty pink bonnets she always wore on smiling Sunday mornings, and the conscious looks we gave each other across the aisle. You remember, no doubt, that pleasant time in the sugar-camp, when all four of us, with each a mug of delicious syrup, went down to the brook to cool it and drink. We were too earnest for jokes with or about the sweet lasses. And you have not forgotten how in the still summer days we sometimes wandered to that same little stream and waded in the pure water, and how the timid little things ventured out, their white toes spreading over the clean pebbles like live things. Holmes's picture reminds us:

> Maidens dancing on the grapes,
> Their milk-white ankles splashed with red.

You are a ripened man, and so am I, but it would be sacrilege to forget these things. Trifles they are, no doubt, and shamefacedly referred to, if at all, but inestimably have they contributed to us. If Mary and Eliza are not our wives, the good women who are are none the worse for our innocent tenderness to them. Job, my bachelor friend, broadly asserts that he advises the girls never to marry men who have not been in love a dozen times; that it is with the affections as with the muscles; they grow and strengthen by use. Grotesque, of course, and extravagant, but a little of truth may be found in it as in every thing. My gilded memories of Mary come out of the past and help me to appreciate another who is better, as the vintage of half an age is preferable to the raw juices, unpurified by long voyaging upon the fretful sea and unmellowed by years of sanctifying repose. If I shut my eyes sometimes and dream of innocent pleasures, as Paul's with Virginia, I am sure a new touch of tenderness and delicacy unconsciously

attends my caresses of that other Mary who sits by my side, her memory, perhaps, idly summoning up blithe blinks of some sunny boy, which have helped to make her, the Maker of us all knows how much, the good woman she is to me. It is true we do not speak to each other of these things, but assume them, nevertheless. Age, said Grandfather Titbottom, with a smile of immortal youth, is not a matter of years, but of feeling. My wife and I lately talked of this after reading one of the thoughtful essays of John Foster. In no way can we account for ourselves so well as by a careful review and analysis of the associates which chance or affinity have put in our way. So good and lovable is my wife, that in robbing her of one memory I should risk making her so much the less charming and saintly. If some remembrances force from her a sigh, I would not make her oblivious of them any more than I would put out the light of her beaming eyes. In her integrity I have her and would keep her, here and

hereafter. Think of a self-righteous, conceited reader, who would presume to tear out inexplicable or exceptional passages of the Good Book as he read them.

[Mary the First, you know, is now a widow, and lives in one of your beautiful Western cities. The prosperous drover she married I never saw, nor do I regret it. My only impressions of him are got from a hideous portrait which hangs over the parlor mantel. Some years ago (my wife accounted for the delay by a storm on the lake) I travelled out of my way to pay the widow a visit. I found her plump and rosy as Hebe, and without the aid of dressmaker or cosmetics. The snug little sofa we snugly occupied during the evening was little roomier than the modern old gentleman's easy-chair. But oh, how the portrait glared upon us. I declare to you, Jack, I never behaved so well in all my life as while in its awful presence. The stiff, stick fingers I felt tempted to knock off with my cane while waiting for the little charmer to come

in. Its one wholly visible ear seemed to move and belly like the sail of a sloop to catch every syllable of our interesting talk. The thin hair was brushed so sleek, and had such a pomatum gloss, that never a fly had dared to light upon it. The eyes, as Thackeray would say, goggled round savage. The complexion had the hue of a peeled egg a little browned in the roasting. One side of the glossy blue coat hung so heavily that I shall believe till my dying day there was a stiletto in it. Several times since that night with the frightful picture and the cherry-lipped relict, I have seen in my dreams the treacherous weapon steal from its scabbard of shiny broadcloth, and felt it push its way persistently between my ribs, as a pin pierces a pippin. A moment's gush, then gone forever. Oh, if there be a legacy a dying man can leave utterly to damn his memory, it is a portrait, forever to embarrass his widow.]

II.

COME.

II.

COME.

JACK, you are a philosopher, and have never travelled. You have been contented to grow with your cattle and corn on your fat Mississippi acres, while I have roamed like a vagrant over the world. I have wished often we could see each other as we are, to compare notes and mark progress. Leave, I pray you, your short-horns and sorghum, and spend a fortnight with me amidst gas, and tall buildings, and horse-cars. Leave your accustomed ruts, and get into others as different as Nantucket from Chicago. I do not say you will go home a wiser or a better man.

If you come, let me suggest you stay at

The Universe. You would find the great hotel a world within itself. Creature-comforts would close round you like a pillow. Every thing you could wish would be anticipated, or could be had for the asking, all set down methodically in your bill, silently slipped under your door every seventh-day morning. The porter taking your luggage at the door will be civil and sturdy, and a greenback will reward him. The two or three clerks at the office will be as clean and smiling as bridegrooms. But let me suggest thus early that you have an eye to the devices. All here is gold that glitters. Present yourself at the marble counter with impressive and masterly deliberation, with the repose of power and distinction, your great-coat buttoned carefully to the chin. Before ungloving to register your name, very quietly inquire if some celebrity, most in the newspapers for the time being, has arrived and asked after you. Be sure to do this with a quiet air verging on indifference; for studied quietness in these times and places is every

thing. Your comfort during your stay will very much depend on these apparently trifling things. But observe that the extreme of quietness may be as unfortunate as the unconscious ease of a man in his own house; it will argue the guest an over-actor, or timid and unacquainted with the world. The Boots will detect either, and vote him a bumpkin or a boor. Balancing means and ends is nice exercise, and busies the ingenuity of the world. People who do not learn the art, rarely get the worth of their labor or money. Their best attainments may be too expensive; to accomplish little they may risk all. A conceit illustrating it came into my head this morning, and curled into rhyme insensibly:

'Twas of an Irishman crossing a field,
With a scythe swung over his shoulder:
Espying a snake in the grass concealed,
And finding not near him a bowlder,
Or stick, or weapon of any kind,
Determined with snath to kill:
Forgetting the blade his neck was behind,
The blow he aimed with skill:

The snake at once was killed quite dead,
But the blade cut off the Irishman's head.

[You never rhyme? Sorry for it. I thought every man fit to live had a twist of the sort in him.]

Job's experience is suggestive. Having been unfortunate in the treatment he received at one of the great hotels, he resolved, upon returning to town, to try another, varying his manner, and summoning all his resources to make his presence impressive and commanding. In the most leisurely way he stepped out of the carriage, into the office, and up to the counter, and registered his name. The elegant clerk, taking the pen from his hand in a graceful way, was about to assign him to 1001 or 1007, or some other interior room under the eaves, looking out upon a court into which a ray of clean sunshine had never entered, when he suggested in an indifferent way that if the Governor and General —— called, he wished them shown to his room. A scarcely perceptible tremor was observed in the obliging gentle-

man's fingers, and instead of the four unwritten skyward figures was placed opposite his name a single numeral, assigning a large and richly-furnished apartment on the first floor, near the grand parlor, and looking out upon the green and shaded and yet dewy square. It was a morning in midsummer, and the view was delightful; not telescopic and grand as yours over your fat valley, but, to a bachelor, who has always lived in cities, inspiring. He was shown up by the sagacious clerk in person, who, in a flattering but humble way, opened the windows, pushed back the lace curtains, and let in the fresh and fragrant air in a flood. Three brimming pitchers of ice-water came one after another unasked, and Job declares that a king on his throne never reposed in greater magnificence of feeling.

And, by the way, he always adds, after relating the circumstance, that later in the morning he went into the barber's room of the hotel to have the dust, gathered on the road from the sea, brushed out of his whiskers,

and found the tonsorial professor at an open window, in an easy-chair, engaged with the summer number of the North American. He rose not with the precipitation usual under such circumstances with gentlemen of that profession, but with the ease of opulence and the serenity of a senator. Expressing a wish to have his boots polished, another gentleman, as illustrative of self-respect as the hair-dresser, stepped from a side-room, and protecting himself with a clean toga of linen, went to work at the leather with as much apparent pride and dignity as a chief justice arranging his dicta. While Job's extremities were most artistically being rubbed up, the clerk at the office who received him, and the man who supplied one of the pitchers of ice-water, came in, off duty, both of them, and the four engaged in a critical discussion of an article in the quarterly referred to, by Lowell or Emerson, he forgets which. He learned afterward, with pride, that three of them were graduates of universities.

The great establishment is nearly as wonderful and noiseless as the machine it is named for. So nice an attention is given to details, and so wise a general providence extends over the whole, that it would seem an invisible grain of dust in a gudgeon of the coffee-grinder in the lower cellar story would occasion universal disorder. So perfect the management that every wheel and pen and employé seems inevitably and fatally absorbed with a particular duty, and indifferent to the work of every other. Of course there are exceptional occasions of misfortune, as for instance sometimes on a stormy Sunday in midwinter, when the guests are all at home and weather-bound, a disaster will happen to the heating-apparatus, emptying the public rooms of the house, and filling the grates in all the chambers, as a frost will sometimes occur in June, huddling the poultry in the barn, and cutting off relentlessly the early cucumbers.

I am too lazy to write, and I wish above all things you were here to see for yourself.

Enjoy it you would, I know, ineffably. Your quick and penetrating sense would find ample opportunity for employment. Even as a boy I remember you used to know what things meant and weighed, and that is a faculty not very apt to wear out or dull. Every day I see something I wish I had your old way of looking at from a dozen stand-points. You were always wise and broad, I neither nor ever. Your unerring observation and mathematical sense were never so acute or severe as to puncture or wound. If your fine brain measured to a hair and weighed to an atom, your human heart floated in the milk of human kindness. If you sometimes uttered in the freest way the most searching and unpalatable truths, they came in tones as rich and pure as the swinging oriole's. It is so easy to be mean, and so hard to be generous in our judgments, that no wonder reflection makes us potter about forming them. Human nature is so bad, or so good, in a good or a bad place, that one who knows it will hesitate about too fine a sight upon it.

Alas, says Heine, one ought really to write against no one in this world. We are all of us sick and suffering enough in this great lazaretto. Many a piece of polemical writing reminded him, he says, of a revolting quarrel in a little hospital at Cracow, where he was an accidental spectator, and where it was terrible to hear the sick mocking and reviling each other's infirmities, how emaciated consumptives ridiculed those who were bloated with dropsy, how one laughed at a cancer in the nose of another, and he again jeered the locked jaws and distorted eyes of his neighbor, until finally those who were mad with fever sprang naked from bed, and tore the coverings and sheets from the maimed bodies around, and there was nothing to be seen but revolting misery and mutilation.

During the major part of a year or two my poor wife has been at a water-cure, and some twinges of my old injury from the falling grape-vine (you remember it, you rogue) having come back to me after an absence of some

years, and inclining to linger, not letting me go out as often as I would, I have had plenty of time, in one great hotel and another, to look through and into them a little. If, in the haste of preparation, the flowing bowl be not suited to your palate, pray set it down to the absence of Mary the Second, the twinges aforesaid, or my intimacy with Job. You never use lemon.

III.

THE UNIVERSE.

III.

THE UNIVERSE.

I SHALL not take up your precious time with the mere materialities. Rich and elegant furniture and upholstery are now so common that a word to anybody about them would be carrying coals to Newcastle. The one unusual and unfashionable thing, perhaps, is the strength of the chairs and sofas. A stout man, like yourself, need give himself no uneasiness about going through. And the beds, Jack, you would appreciate. They tempt apostrophe. The airy mattresses, enveloped every day in fresh snowy linen, the folds as distinct as lines of latitude and longitude, close round old and young bodies alike, snugly and gently as

sea-water. They are indeed respecters of persons. Soothing their touch as loving nurse, and all-pervading. As beds for bachelors, no suspicion can attach to them, and for men and their wives, no contest can occur for the disputed middle. So level my own, the chambermaid is puzzled always to know just when my wife visits me.

As I said, the apparent general harmony will so strike you, that the machine will appear to run of itself. But put an eye through its crystal covering, and you will be as forcibly struck with the consciousness of every part in its relation to every other and the whole. There is such fidelity and responsibility imposed upon every man and woman on the pay-rolls, that the work of each becomes inseparable from the work of every other. The eye single is an eye omniscient. A little signal strikes every ear as the touch of the key in an insignificant office alarms every operator on the line. The young man at the private door, who seems so mechanically to let persons in, keeping his

place in a cheap story with his thumb, would astonish you with his knowledge. So all the way through. The system of espionage is only so perfect as not to be seen. Every movement of every guest is observed, and every habit analyzed and accounted for. The knowing man of the world will hardly deliberate a mischief in a hotel. What is not known is assumed, or guessed at, analogically. The situation, doubtful or novel to the adventuring guest himself, is a common one to the observation of the spy, who, groaning with his scuttle of coal, so obsequiously seems to avoid him. The purpose, perhaps hardly conceived by him, has time and again developed in the folly of others. Folly of any sort, especially contraband, as you descend the scale of men, becomes more apprehensible. Down very low in the virtues, so low as just to touch the line where the vices begin, the meaner faculties are found acutest. The mind's eye grows conical, as a rat's. Gross appetite and passion are known and read of all men; the brutes that

perish seem even to scent them. Pure principles and pure motives, in their exaltation, are invisible but in their effects. Into the translucent depths of goodness the bad eye never wanders; but evil is in every vision, and reflects itself forever. But excuse flashes; pyrotechnics for boys, refinements for sophomores. What goes up must come down. A plain word will say it better. All men are policemen to evil-doers, especially at hotels. Exposure is nearly inevitable. What the chambermaid doesn't know, the fireman can tell her. If the modest lady who arrived with the honest gentleman, by the evening boat, is not his cousin, the fact will be surely known at the office very early in the morning.

Incident. Scene, office. Time, morning. Judge Finesse, a pure and distinguished citizen of one of our beautiful interior cities, has been spending a few days in town on professional business. His stay at the great hotel has been peculiarly pleasant. Run to death at home with hard work, change of situation

and associations and food has revived his energies. The night has been refreshingly cool, after a very hot day, and the comfortable chamber he has occupied, fronting to the south, has received through its great windows the stimulating breezes. Later down than usual, he has hurried his breakfast a little not to miss a business engagement. Passing composedly through the office, the accomplished clerk, with remarkable blandness, addresses him: 'Good-morning, good-morning, Judge. Hope you are well and comfortable. Charming day before us. Ah, by the way, Judge,' grasping his hand with regretful tenderness, and dropping his voice to gentle softness, 'how distressing it is to blunder. Never told you your room was promised to an old guest; time up this morning. Oh, excuse me, Judge; the lady in No. —, on your floor; you know her. Her room is not large enough for two by half. Sorry we can't accommodate her; have to turn people off every day. Charming lady; carriage ready. Early engagements annoying;

don't let me detain you. In town again, give us a call; not always so crowded. Distressing to blunder.' The Judge, a little disconcerted, was about to protest, when the amiable clerk, in a most graceful way, looking straight at the guest the while, crossed his lips significantly with a finger, and, after a moment's pause, bade the abused good man a final good morning. A line from Watts ran riot through the Judge's head as he rode down the street: Dangers stand thick through all the ground: and the same evening, at the sea-side, he was heard to express new views on the doctrine of special providences.

Hotels used to be devoted to the accommodation of travellers and temporary guests. The best rooms were reserved for them, and pains taken to please them. Now it is otherwise. They are mainly filled by people who live in them, and who possess their best comforts. For the good treatment of persons who are only in the house for a few days, the managers take little or no special care. Unless

the temporary guest be a lion, whose entertainment would advertise the establishment, or a spendthrift, to swell the extras, he is of too little consideration for personal attention. By the aid of devices, he may avoid a loft lodging or a bed in the court; but the best accommodations can scarcely be had for affection, favoritism, or money. As before said, the best comforts are permanently possessed, and for residents the great establishment is conducted. The treatment others receive is secondary and incidental. Especially the system of fees gives the former every advantage. Fees in top figures for ostensible charges, and fees for every thing, descending through all the gradations of service. Fees to the porter, who fees the proprietor for his license; fees to the boy who takes your umbrella and duster in the check-room, who pays a rental; fees to the chambermaid, who modestly, and not at all suggestingly, tells you how mean are her wages, the housekeeper dividing the profits of her appealing eloquence; fees to the fire-

man, which go to the aforesaid porter; fees to the table-waiter, who came all the way from Ireland, who wasn't in the July riots, who never repeated a word he overheard at the table, who has a wife and seven children, one of them very small, please your honor, who gets all the best cuts, and never serves cold dishes, who always knows a gentleman by his kindness to servants, who would be stupid if he gave all you give him to his superior, who pays the big bonus for his office monthly; fees for soap and water in the wash-room; fees to the self-sacrificing genius who presides over the dressing-room, whose occupation is so unwholesome; fees to the young man at the door of the dining-room, who tells you he is a detective, who has saved many a hat and coat to gentlemen who never gave him a shilling, but who has since watched the same hats and coats just the same as if each had given him a guinea; fees to the boy in the reading-room, who never files the St. Louis papers till he sees the generous St. Louisan come in, who

always gets the virgin reading; fees, in short, for every thing, regular and extra, necessary and luxury, from office down to boot-room, from a bottle of Widow Cliquot to a sheet of indispensable paper. The habitué, who knows all the springs, and which to touch, most effectually to get the best things and the best service, and who is willing and able to pay for them, will always of course command them. He stands in the position of regular customer to the patronized, and will get good attention when the few days' guest will be nearly neglected. The latter will soon be out of the house and gone forever. The other will remain to give while his money or wind holds out. So, necessarily, the habitués pitch the tone and make the atmosphere of the place; and with outline sketches of some of these it is my purpose to amuse you a little. To the many who are here from time to time, as at a railway station, because they must be, and are absorbed with matters to them greater than meat and drink and glitter for a day or two,

what is here said may be as appropriate and interesting as to you.

[You want a nap? Very well. Put aside your pipe. Poise yourself in your easy-chair. Oh, the value of a good conscience. Never mind the falling manuscript. You can pick it up when you wake. I go out to ride with the proprietor. Livery-men are so kind, hotel-keepers need not keep carriages. Strange they are so liberal, considering the trouble they are put to by orders. Orders, orders, orders. In a single day a score of orders for plain carriages for shopping in the morning; a score for open barouches in the afternoon; a score for close coupés in the evening; all from the one hotel whose proprietor and book-keepers and clerks are dead-heads. And the high prices for feed. The good-natured stable-man. He never tells his wrongs. Found never help who never would his wounds impart, Spenser says.]

IV.

LITTLE ONES.

IV.

LITTLE ONES.

Nor shall I waste your time by more than alluding to the many boys and girls just coming to manhood and womanhood. Vealy and irresponsible, they are here without their option. Thoughtless or thoughtful parents have brought them here and pay the scores. They are innocent and beautiful. Youth is always beautiful. You might sigh for them; but you forget who sighed for you. We all must see the folly of it.

Scene. Breakfast-room. Two fragrant youths have just sat down. One of them, the more pretentious, drawls wearily: 'Fashionable life laboweous. Will Lent never come?

Monday night a german at Mrs. Brown's, Tuesday night a german at Mrs. Smith's, last night a german at Mrs. Obscew's. Lattah vewy laboweous. Only eight couples; twelve the happy numbaw.' Omelet discussed. Practising on the servant, the young man grows sprightly and patronizing. 'Gawge,' he drawls again, less wearily; 'do you know Miss Peachblow? I saw her on the avenue as I came in. Rawther pooty at times.'

Scene, an hour later. Music-room. Three pretty young girls, and one not so young nor pretty, with flat curls round her temples, who seems to be matronizing, announces pleasantly: 'Lecture to-night, girls, I see, by Miss Dickinson.' 'Indeed,' responds one of the pretty three, 'Miss Wickerson. Want to know. Wonder if she has a waterfall.'

You are a human fellow, Jack, and will be astonished when I tell you children do not abound in these places. An honest natural man regards them as the best fruits of marriage. Not to have them I know you would

consider a calamity. You needn't stop reading to count on your fingers your own possessions in that line. I know in a general way your severe ideas of duty, and have no doubt of their fullest realization. Your old-fashioned conscientious habits extend no doubt to family matters as to all others. You know by heart that radical old orthodox sermon of poor Yorick, which Trim read so divinely to Uncle Toby, Walter Shandy, and Dr. Slop, while Obadiah was gone for the forceps, and no doubt you religiously illustrate in all your life its concise summing up: Trust that man in nothing who has not a conscience in every thing. But times have changed, and orthodoxy is not so muscular, nor ethics so compendious. Life is constantly developing new uses. A little while ago the theories of Malthus were considered impious or ridiculous. Not so now. Their practicability is so far established as to be somewhat realized. At first blush it would appear anomalous that a hundred or two wives and husbands should

from year to year eat, drink, and be merry, and bear no ostensible blessings. But the world moves, and progress has defined responsibilities. Essentially eclectic and practical, society has seized and adopted the best rules of all the sciences. Political economy has been ransacked, and its best truths appropriated. So much to do in this world, and so little time to do it in, that inevitably there must be a division of labor. Classes for every thing, and individuals for every class. Many cooks are sure to spoil the broth. To do any one thing well it must absorb the life. Your stupid Yorkshireman, imported with your lovely Durhams, feeds and curries and combs with a zeal and energy that your scholarly boy Benjamin carries into his search for Latin and Hebrew roots. Nothing, you must know, is so absorbing as fashionable life. Balls and calls and parties and operas and shopping leave little time for any thing else. Nothing you can imagine could be so embarrassing to a life of gayety as children. If by any mischance

or miscalculation such an incumbrance accrues, the interest in the most brilliant and enchanting festivities can be only qualified and alloyed. Nurses, most trustworthy, fortunately, can be obtained; but the mother, notwithstanding, cannot withdraw her mind wholly from her offspring. The success of her friend's magnificent entertainment would be disparaged in proportion to her uneasiness and anxiety. Besides, the dress-maker's patterns are not adapted to such exceptions. The rules of tape and scissors are remorseless. Artistic proportions must be preserved. (Just here you will recall Sydney Smith's alliteration of diameter and derision.) Stays and devices do much, but cannot do every thing. The form, paradoxically, must be fitted to the mould. Out of fashion out of the world. And delays would be dangerous. Out of sight out of mind. The lists of friends would be revised, and a chance would occur of being left off. So, Jack, you see how it is. Look closely into the proprieties and the absurdity will not be more apparent than the

necessity. Imagine a mother living on such sweets and spices as fashion furnishes. Her thin blood would be as distasteful to the hungry cherub as its persistent grasping at the diamond ear-bobs would be annoying. No, no. The tastes and requirements of gayety and maternity are incongruous. Life to be effective must be kept simple. Fashion is exacting, and will not let her votaries divide or suspend their worship. 'Babies,' she says, oracularly, 'are vulgar. They are troublesome, and spoil the shape. My dears, do better with your lives. Keep your charms, and display them not at home. Encourage the beautiful; the useful encourages itself. Adorn and glitter. Tempt flatteries and live on them. Sleep till you cease to dream; dance till you die.' And they dare not question nor demur. The sweet boy, who nearly cost his mother's life, must be put away. Her life is too precious to be given to him for whom it was saved. Once a day or once a week is as often as she can see him. She must not stop in the dance

to think if he is well and warm and sleeping. Resign him she must to the purchased mercy of the stranger-woman, and risk her future and his forever.

[Dear lunatic Lamb. You remember his famous toast, after having been plagued all the morning by noisy children: To the memory of the much-abused and much-calumniated good King Herod.]

But poodles, let me say, are admissible. They are thought to possess the requisite merits without any of the drawbacks. Some employment must be had for the affections, which the dear things appreciate as much as infants, without being so exacting. Down out of the realm of bewildering pleasure, 'tis sweet to hear the poodle's honest welcome. Released from the intoxicating atmosphere of music and beauty and perfumes, 'tis refreshing to unlock the sources of feeling, and let the tender emotions unrestrainedly gather about an object worthy of them. Such delightful dalliance composes the thoughts and

cushions the nerves. The most desperate cannot always dance. The best-ribbed body will not always bear the stays. The eye must weary with the dazzling diamonds. The most flexible face must relax or the empty smile would fasten. The lambent tongue must sometimes lay its length in stillness. The ear would sicken with perpetual flattery. The brain would soften without the sweet pillow. All the distraction and dizziness of a fashionable career may be perfectly soothed away by an occasional hour of gushing caressing. The heart-rending sobs of poor dear King Charles are kissed away, and he forgets his desolation in the lonely chamber. He believes all the vows which are made to him in these hours of paroxysmal fondness. His voice of murmur dies out, and their hearts go together like the clouds of the morning. (Brainerd testifies that he saw two of them tinged with the rising sun; that in the dawn they floated on and mingled into one.)

So doth all nature illustrate itself. The

angels, for relaxation, are said to leave their blissful abodes to whisper their heavenly trifles into the ears of sleeping and smiling innocence on earth. Byron is described by his fellow-poet as standing on the Alps and on the Appenines, and with the thunder talking as friend to friend, and in sportive twist weaving a garland of the lightning's fiery wing; as laying his hand upon the ocean's mane, and playing familiar with his hoary locks; and then turning and with the grasshopper, who sang his evening song, conversing.

At home the brilliant Seraphina can have her dear King Charles always with her. The rules do not exclude him from the eating-rooms as they do the babies. A chair is drawn out for him, and the bill of fare is searched for bits suitably delicious for his palate. Great care is taken with his diet, as do all that they can they cannot make him drink Kissingen or Vichy. His breath must be sweet and fragrant to be fit to mix with his loving Seraphina's. White meat, breast of the chicken, is

found best suited, in all climates and latitudes, to the stomach of the delicate animal; with sweet cream, of course, for dessert.

Incident. Time, midnight. The Universe announced to be on fire. All the perfect apparatus in the house and out of it soon operating. In the midst of the excitement and terror, coming down the stairway, is seen the affectionate Seraphina, with her poor helpless King Charles 'pon her bosom. A little later comes the nurse with the baby; an obscurity and almost a secret till that dreadful midnight. The fruit, of course, of honest wedlock, but tabooed.

V.

TABLE D'HÔTE.

V.

TABLE D'HÔTE.

I SUPPOSE, in your busy life with head and hands, it has never occurred to you that any considerable number of persons could be brought together, especially in America, whose regular and earnest occupation would seem to be to eat. The maxim inculcated in our boyhood, eat to live, not live to eat, was accepted as the summary of all table wisdom. In those days the early morning meal was soon dispatched that the serious work of the day might be commenced. And serious work it was, I often think, for our fathers, single handed and alone, to attack with their axes the unbroken forest, to make for themselves homes and independence. Looking over the now smiling and fruit-

ful fields and orchards and vineyards, the toil and heroism which produced them seem incredible. Indeed, incredible it all seems to me now; for, accustomed to see but the stunted shrubs which struggle up through the granite streets, it is impossible to realize the grandeur of the old trees, with their great roots and branches interlocked in the black soil and blue sky. I remember, lying on our backs, how the trooping clouds seemed just to brush their tops. A squirrel up there defied the rifle. And the majestic oak we used reverently to guess the age and height of, joining hands with Mary and Eliza and taking the old fellow in our arms. His tremendous fall during the memorable storm seemed for a moment to still even the thunder. Such an old monarch must have supplied the sublime image of Read in his poem on the death of Webster:

> The great are falling from us, one by one,
> As fall the patriarchs of the forest trees;
> The winds shall seek them vainly, and the sun
> Shine on each vacant space for centuries.

In those heroic days, plain food, in sufficient quantity, was all that was required. The appetite was kept whetted by labor, and digestion was as easy and unconscious as respiration. Sandwiches of corn-bread and bacon, with the fallen tree for a table, untouched and unpolished but by the winds of heaven, and the glittering axe for a platter, brighter than the brightest silver, made a delicious and brilliant dinner for the pioneer, after six honest hours of woodman's gymnastics. His simple and earnest life was ever a song or a prayer. The present was all thankfulness and the future all hope. His daily enjoyments, dearly and honestly earned, were twice paid for and blessed in health and sweet conscience by the Master Employer. His title to the acres he opened to the sun was directly from their Creator; and the bread they brought him was the sweat of his own face. His future, in the steady serenity of heroic faith, appeared abounding in only such promises as his fidelity and devotion entitled him to realize. His

work and wants were so simple as ever to keep him close to the Giver. There was no middle-man to divide his blessings or qualify his thanksgiving. His health the Helper, and his will the Assurance, his own short arm was long enough to reach the Bountiful and Everlasting.

But here, where reluctant exercise, and little of that, is substituted for inspiring labor, the appetite is dull and weary, and genius must be called in to assist it. The old maxim being reversed, and one of the essential means of life made to become its one engrossing end, nature, in her simple ways, is superseded, and art, with her endless arts, substituted. Like a lie, once told, forever and everywhere challenging the truth to combat it, this violence to nature must entail its consequences. From daylight till midnight the table is always spread, and the ends of the earth and the bottom of the sea are hunted to keep it supplied. The cook, once self-taught and ready-made, has become a professor and a philoso-

pher. His libraries exhaust the sciences, and his genius pervades latitudes and elements. The names and constituency of his dishes are set down in encyclopædias. (Jerrold's Hermit of Bellyful is hardly an exaggeration or caricature.) So many and novel his inventions that only the resources of arithmetic and the study of new languages would enable you to count and pronounce them. To France the world is indebted for most of this kitchen wisdom, as well as for most of the refinements in vice and philosophy, and her language adheres to it as tenaciously as it does to them. If we accept her definitions of morals, and submit to her guidance in matters which reach beyond this life, we ought not to hesitate about adopting the names she has given to her culinary inventions. France, you know, is the standard of civilization, and you run a great risk of being considered vulgar if you do not know her language. The English, in America, is a very common language, and is mostly used by common people and natives. It answers

well enough for ordinary uses, but must be abandoned as advancement is made in social standing. For prosperous people, even, who have yet the scent of labor about them, it may answer; but when their probation of obeisance and disinfection is ended; when their new birth of elegance and aristocracy is forgiven, and they are fully admitted into the charmed circle, they are presumed to have forgotten the vulgar vernacular which sold their soap and their poisons, their stocks and their lies, and to have adopted the chosen language of courts and civilization. So be very careful at table to give the French names to the dishes you ask for. The flunkeys and fine ladies and fine gentlemen will not laugh at you, nor for a moment suspect you are a useful man.

In the eating department, Jack, you will be amused at the ambition which prevails to be late at breakfast. The man who leaves his bed early is suspected of earnest purposes. You will find the best people, whose excellence is determined by their having nothing

to do, are late risers. By the time the majority of the world have earned their dinners, the grandees carelessly lounge into the breakfast-room, and the respectable hour of meeting each other is there and thereafter a matter of pride and congratulation.

But dinner is the event of the day, and the achievement of life. It is anticipated as a fête, dressed for as an entertainment, lingered over as a luxury, and discussed as the thing of life to live for. Eyes beam, diamonds glitter, laces flutter, till you would think all the ladies maidens just married, and all the men Apollos and bridegrooms. If their lips speak wisdom it will be of the banquet and its partakers. The meats and vegetables are so artistically ripened that mastication is easy and digestion half accomplished, and ample time and opportunity are given to discuss the guests as well as the dishes. To know just how many ingredients make up the soup, just how long since the halibut was captured, just how many days the beef has lain on the ice, just the time

since the pheasant was winged in your prairie, is not information at all inconsonant with conjectures as to the genuineness of the diamonds and laces of the lady opposite, as to the gains and losses in stocks of Mr. Breezy, at the other end of the table, as to the probable result of the flirtation between Miss Rosy and the brilliant Colonel, or as to the chances of the too conscious lady in pink at the left of the gentleman with side-whiskers being his bride or his sweetheart, or his wife or another's.

The stout gentleman in a low waistcoat, mixing his salad so abstractedly and artistically, would be a study for you. His obedient and handy servant is kept busy supplying materials. The lettuce, by the good diner, is carefully culled and examined, to see that no disgusting bug is hidden away between the suspicious leaves. The eggs are boiled to the happy hardness. The caster is exhausted for condiments and appetizers, and still the poor servant is kept busy supplying the artist's wants. All the while the good lord of the stomach is

patient and absorbed and occupied. The sweet napkins are flaked about him and upon him, under his chin, over his knees, on his left, on his right, before his eyes. His calmness is the serenity of an astronomer looking up a new planet. The requisite salt to the infinitesimal of a grain is meted out, the red and black pepper mathematically proportioned, the acid and oil measured to a drop, and the whole is chopped up and sugared till the result in the dish looks so perfectly mixed as if indeed there had once been employed upon it all the chemistry of nature.

And the little woman with the blue face and twisted nose and big diamond would interest you as much. To see her go through the bill of fare you would think she had just escaped with her life from a respectable boarding-house. Double portions of every thing, and rapidly disappearing. She is a mystery and a wonder. My poor wife, invalid that she is, with little interest in this fading world, has watched her with absorbing interest, and

finds in her gastronomic enthusiasm and achievements an incentive to live to know the result of her prodigious industry. Go when you will into the spacious saloons devoted to eating, you will always find her. Early and late and all the time at breakfast, sitting through the whole hour devoted to luncheon, at the plebeian's early dinner, at the later state banquet, at tea, silently and insatiably, and at supper at midnight, with raw oysters, cold chicken, a pitcher of milk, and olives, just for a nightcap, as she facetiously and felicitously calls them, at the same time bearing a hungry eye on the smoking stew of a passenger by the midnight train.

And you would be not less interested in observing the select gentlemen who always occupy the table directly in range of the main entrance. Their leisurely indifference and repose are not less remarkable than their practised habits of observation. Possibly one of them, with the buttoned coat, younger than the rest, may have blushed sometime within a

decade, as his eye has an adventuring hesitancy denoting occasional introspection. His look is not quite a stare, and his eye seems of shorter range than the rifled brasses about him. His glances, compared with theirs, have a random unsteadiness, as occasional shots which precede or follow a volley. But he seems ashamed of his little remnant of modesty, and no doubt in time will achieve the envied effrontery. When he forgets that his mother was a woman, and once was married, he will as indecently discuss a bride as any of his accomplished companions. His eye in company with theirs will follow and fasten upon her with an eagerness and a tenacity in proportion to the pain of her embarrassment. And if looks fall short of perfectly torturing the shrinking innocent, his pitiless words will audibly accompany theirs to complete her misery. Poor hesitating consciousness; how it staggers and falls back before this faculty of gossips. They know every poor woman's coat of mail, and strike hardest where she is most unprotected and sensitive.

But heartily they love a shining mark of artlessness for skilful practice. The veterans of watering-places and public amusements, who have withstood the searching gaze of elegant idlers and roués for untold seasons, they know to be iron-clad and impenetrable. They prefer not to dull their daggers upon callousness, but to keep them bright and whetted for such as are yet a little tender. The shrinking gives a relish, and pure blood is fragrant. My wife, Jack, is the most amiable woman in the world, but she will sometimes lose her temper with these philosophers. While they sit as easily as in a restaurant, with their bottles of wine ostentatiously ranged before them, surveying complacently the dining-room to find some new object for discussion, her tongue, in spite of her, will sometimes quicken into eloquent indignation. If I would naturally smile at their sublime conceit, the energy of my wife's denunciation still more excites my admiration; and for this splendid reminder of her old brilliancy, I am quite willing to forgive them.

May they sit while they live, as they have sat since The Universe opened, at the same well-served and conspicuous table, and may they never have wives to blush for their immodesty and uncharitableness.

VI.

DRAWING-ROOM.

VI.

DRAWING-ROOM.

THAT last glass of Burgundy, Jack, went right to the spot, and the cordial and coffee fastened it. The spinal column is stiffened prodigiously, and the twinge has departed. My dear boy, let us be in fashion, and saunter through the halls and lounge in the parlors a while, just to assist the generous dinner. And Job will accompany us. How brilliant every thing is. And the ladies, how radiant and charming. Many of the most beautiful, and all of the most desperate of the guests are to be met with at this hour. Some gay fellows, who live mysteriously, who dress showily, who know the town and everybody, who talk

stocks and horses and sonnets and French, who are not guests, but who seem perfectly at home, are to be met with also. Of course, in such a brilliant assemblage, you will find a sprinkling of widows. They seek these gay scenes to forget their sorrows and temper their woes. Your kindly observant eye will detect them by the shadows which linger upon them, and by the touching sadness which restrains their smiles and mellows their voices. Widowhood is so interesting that I once told my wife that I could think of but one woman in the world who would not be rendered more attractive by it; at which remark she smiled so sweetly as to incline me to question even the one exception; but observing that the little suffering darling seemed for the moment endued with new hopes of health and life, I upbraided myself for entertaining the impious shadow of a doubt, and determined repentantly to put it away forever. If they sometimes appear a trifle too gay, it must be accounted for by the general pressure of their afflictions. The human

heart is happily so constituted that every weight will not always keep it down. It has an affinity for zephyrs and sunshine, and will sometimes float up to the rippling surface. The same machinery which crushes out tears of bitterness, distils delicious nectar. You know how Burns puts it:

> Chords which vibrate sweetest pleasure,
> Thrill the deepest notes of woe.

It were a wonder if Job, considering his desolate life of celibacy, had not some spice of asceticism; but no human being ever heard him whisper a disparaging word of the sorrowing widows. If any one class of men more than another be attracted by them, it is that unfortunate one which has always suffered for the want of that sweet use of the emotions which widowhood mourns. They are mutually attracted and mutually sympathize. They meet upon common ground, and naturally mingle their woes. In the solace of companionship are compounded all losses and all wants. The

saddest memories are dissipated by coveted substitution, and the long-suffering hopes are sublimed in fruition. If the satirical world sometimes laughs at the companionship, the spirits of just men and lost sweethearts rejoice over it. If there be one transcendent cause of ecstasy to departed husbands revisiting these earthly shades of trial and affliction, or one enduring, unexpressed desire of happy wives to make them wish to linger in them, it may be found in the final happiness of mourning consorts and sighing lovers. Goldsmith, of all the poets, is Job's admiration; but he never praises the Traveller or the Deserted Village without a qualifying allusion to an ill-natured passage in the Citizen of the World. That stain upon the fair fame of the immortal Goldy will too readily occur to you; and you have no doubt wished a thousand times you could blot it out. A poor widow had, in a moment of paroxysmal grief, declared she would never marry till the earth was dry over her husband's grave. A sober second

thought naturally soon occurring to her, the poet describes her at the fresh mound, with a great fan in each hand, heroically summoning all the breezes to hasten her happiness.

Some of these unfortunates are reported fabulously rich, which does not seem to discourage attentions. Even the mysterious gentlemen referred to, who kindly contribute their presence and charms at this hour, seem rather to seek than to avoid them. As a class they unselfishly go about doing good, and humanely take a hand in lifting, wherever found, the superincumbent burdens of humanity. It would warm your heart to see with what disinterestedness they turn from other and more grateful services to smile away the shadows which linger upon these desolate ones. Themselves cheerful and happy, and perfectly free from material burdens, they naturally seek to illumine the dark passages of those who are oppressed and despairing. The distresses of widowhood, with the cares of wealth superadded, have the need of the sweet sympathies

which places of this sort so conveniently supply. Notwithstanding, the sorrowing creatures seem reluctant to yield their tenacious fidelity to cherished memories and investments, since all the efforts of importunate and sympathizing suitors fail to entangle them into new alliances. They linger from year to year in these haunts of pleasure, and hear continually the gushing vows of devotion, and still remain obstinately wedded to their desolation and cares.

The graceful creature just now acknowledging the reluctant compliment of the gentleman with eye-glasses, has made for years the tour of the watering-places, and has the same touching serenity of inconsolableness which she displayed so meekly when I saw her at Newport the summer my wife and I made our first visit. She passes yet for twenty-five, so gently has time dealt with her graces of person and character. How many tempting offers of affection and protection she must have declined in that time. Many a noble man, no doubt, has generously proposed to employ all her

wasting wealth of affection and resources. Still she has refused to be comforted and relieved. So morbid her emotions have become, that the temptations of love and assurances of good guardianship cannot seduce her. And so selfish and narrow have her griefs and cares made her, that she cannot see that in declining an offer of love and sacrifice, she has lost an opportunity of making at least one human being happy and independent.

Very awkward meetings occur sometimes in these scenes of promiscuous gayety. Job tells of one peculiarly so. Passing through the brilliant throng one evening, he felt a gentle touch on the arm, and turning round, discovered his attention was arrested by one of the most beautiful and attractive of the guests, for some years a wife, who begged softly to know if he knew the gentleman who was just taking leave of his friend a few yards off. Answering that he did not, the faithful spouse was kind enough to tell him why she had asked. She said, with a smile of satisfaction

which she seemed unwilling to suppress, that she had met the gentleman two or three times in the street, and that his eyes had followed her round the corner in a way to denote a question whether his feet might not follow her also. The humor of the thing was her excuse for troubling him with the inquiry and the reason for making it. Her being misunderstood was such an amusing achievement that she would like to know the sagacious fellow, that was all.

The contrasts everywhere apparent would interest you. Extremes jostle each other perpetually. An honest young couple, just married, engrossed with themselves and the sweet relation they have just entered, will be directly followed in the promenade by a man and a woman, who, if they have known marriage, have only known it to degrade and disgrace it. The manly clean-minded bridegroom and the maidenly angelic bride are a study and a joke to those who have survived if they ever felt the consummate bliss of love and

purity united. The hymeneal hopes and longings of the ardent and trusting couple are one by one guessed up and gibed at as perishing materialities. The nuptial enjoyments, so sacred to delicacy and darkness that a taper even would not shine upon them, are invaded and glared upon by these satyrs. The dreams which vault over to-day and its trivialities into to-morrow of benedictions and grandeur, are exhausted of the spirit of poesy and prayer, and dwarfed to the measure of disappointment and infidelity. The sanctified passion which so confidingly and trustingly links them together, and so perfectly attunes their aspirations and raptures, is disgustingly perverted, and made to bear the sins of men and of animals. The glitter and array which to the tender lovers seem an atmosphere of sublimation, have but sharpened the human sense of the scoffing realists to anatomic accuracy. The glowing mountains of promise, wrapped in rainbows and reaching to heaven are speculated upon as the delusive mirage of inspiring lust.

But there. How beautiful that other contrast. Admire it as you would a rainbow, with the glow which a hearty kinship with all the world kindles. Those two lovely girls floating by. Each perfectly beautiful, and perfectly contrasting. Noiseless as spring sunshine, and as inspiring. They fill the eye and the mind's eye, and you only gaze. You are as much lost in the vision as poet in his dream or saint in his prayer. A perfect blonde and a perfect brunette, distinct, together, and blending. Raven hair and golden, rippling at random and flowing together. Blue eyes and black, as you look at them, alternating, and confusing your fancies, like the changing hues of a sunset. They fascinate and subdue you, whatever your own eyes or nature. Complexions, nut-brown and alabaster, warm and roseate with innocency and ripeness. Figures so perfectly matched in size, style, and movement, as to appear inseparable. Both of them adorned in harmony with nature. Colors and fabrics not less

adapted to unity than to contrast. What nature and art needed to make each of them perfect is gained by putting them together. If any thing so beautiful under the sun, certainly nothing so ravishing under the gas-light. Blessed accidents which bring them together so often at this hour. Happy miracles which set them down so often upon the public promenade together.

Not much less beautiful the good woman of threescore who is now talking with them. Her complexion is as clear and her face almost as sunny as theirs. That glistening silver lock must but a moment since have turned gray while she unconsciously twisted it. Her voice and smile and eyes do not answer to so much of life and vicissitude. The three sympathize and mingle without shock or discordance.

Now let us especially observe the group of middle-aged women comfortably and composedly seated in the left-hand corner. They are as complacent as if no trouble ever came to any one in this world, and as assured as if all

the world must come to them for counsel. They are perfect types of their class. They have lived so long in public places, and so long devoted themselves to externals, that they have ceased to be attentive to their own thoughts and lives. Living wholly by their senses, the power of reflection is lost by disuse. Their instinctive habit of scenting the motives of others has left them no time to consider their own. Always in a crowd and always exposed, they have grown sharp as the younger Weller in the school of London streets. Accustomed to colors in all their tints and combinations, they criticise even the summer clouds. Without domestic occupations and cares, their only resource is to watch the varying surface of life about them. Good natural eyes often seem able to turn round corners, but theirs make the circuit of square ones unerringly and without difficulty. The slightest suggestion will let loose their whole pack of senses in pursuit. To them every act has its correspondent, as the freaks of the winds

tell themselves in the roar of the chimney. The only use of life which their careless lives of idleness have permitted them to know is amusement. A life of usefulness, if they could apprehend it, would appear to them a paradox. A life of consecration to duties so serious and absorbing as to employ every energy and emotion, and leave no time for such trifling as they live for, would seem a dreamer's fiction. The illustrious Howard, who visited Rome 'under such a despotic consciousness of duty as to refuse himself time for surveying the magnificence of its ruins,' must be to them as much a myth as Jupiter.

Only occasionally are found in combination the qualities and faculties suited to this kind of life. The majority of women would be as unhappy in it as in a toy-factory. To them it would be empty and wearisome, as they could find no employment for their better virtues. The polished surfaces dazzle the eye but do not warm the heart. If they do not weary they fascinate, and fascination never brought

a tear. Its expression is the glitter of an icy summit. An analysis of a character satisfied and delighted with such a life would be interesting and instructive. The faculties and acquirements which express themselves in perfect taste are all there, but the fine sensibilities and affections which are perpetually reaching, as the tentacles of the coral, and yearning to apprehend or convert the wasting or perverted attributes of human nature, would be found wanting. The flower which is most effective for adornment is of another soil and culture than that which discovers itself by its fragrance.

The group is just now excited unusually. A rare scene for its eyes and tongue is before it. You might see these women often without observing so much interest in their faces. Their ordinary expression is indifference. Gamblers and the bad of their own sex only have it more uniformly and perfectly. But their studied lineaments seem now to forget their training. The paroxysm has exposed new lines

and wrinkles, as a thaw makes visible every treacherous crack in the frozen surface. They are discussing a mother and daughter from the interior of the State, on their way to the front to nurse a brave son and brother, wounded in one of the bloody battles of the Rebellion. The stricken ones are attired in such plain garments as their home supplied, but which so outrage the laws of harmony in colors, as to make them a spectacle to these artists. The countrywomen, as they are called, are scanned from head to foot, and every article of dress is the subject of a brilliant joke. The observers imagine the Paris milliners laughing themselves sick at such funny bonnets. They remember to have seen just such shoes when they were children, said to have been worn by their grandmothers. The tucks set them wondering how many persons may have worn the queer old-fashioned dresses, and to how many more, painstaking housewifery may yet adapt them before they reach the rag-bag. And their waists are natural, suggesting an utter

ignorance of all the ingenious machinery of the shops. They wonder what 'such people' can find to do, without the labor and anxiety of dressing. Ah, little do they dream of those earnest lives. The moments till the boat starts are counted by throbs. Thoughts of the wounded soldier make a tumult in their hearts. The mother has carried him in her bosom through the vicissitudes of half her life, and would not let him go till the Republic called for him. Tenderly as her affections gather about him, he is no longer hers, but the country's. The loss to both she feels in his probable death. Her life has been so useful and devoted as to attach her to every neighbor and every citizen, and has made her unconsciously a hearty patriot. If her eyes could see the impertinence she excites, she would pity it. Blank as her gaze appears to them, it is fixed upon the mangled body under the bloody sheet in the busy hospital. If her mind could dwell a moment upon the empty splendor about her, she would blush at her

weakness and infidelity. Her hands are unused to rest in idleness, and feel to her as awkward as they look to the serene idlers. Will her boy survive to see the Republic triumphant? Will the cause demand her other boy also as a sacrifice? Thy will, God of Justice, be done.

VII.

GENTLEMEN'S PARLOR.

VII.

GENTLEMEN'S PARLOR.

THE gentlemen's parlor after dinner is sometimes interesting. I see it is attractive now. Take an easy-chair, Jack, and give it an hour. And let me suggest that you keep command of your face. To enjoy it you must take the tone of gravity which prevails. And summon all your good-nature, for the pleasure of the scene will half be lost if viewed severely. It will sufficiently satirize itself without assistance.

The club of self-admirers and self-exalters is in session. It would be hard to find a half-dozen more comfortable-looking gentlemen. A majority, of course, are bachelors. So much

sleekness and complacency and gravity in the same number of married men would be unaccountable. Too many drafts are made upon the head of a family to permit his character to grow crotchety or chronic. The bachelor, by always having his own way, soon forgets that there is any other stand-point than his own. His habits of thought and life insensibly enwrap him like a cocoon, and in time they become so essentially himself as to be the abode of his brain and sensibility. They fit so snugly and adhere so pertinaciously as to give a general expression of tightness to his character. There is nothing to man more natural than selfishness. It is inevitable if possible. If you, Jack, had not married at twenty, and become a grandfather at forty, you could never have become the man you are; especially if a combination of happy or accidental circumstances had made you rich. Instead of looking on as you now do with strange interest at these gentlemen, you would at this moment be in the same placid and

solitary possession of a little universe of your own, with all your faculties and feelings so completely tethered by your little interests and comforts, as to make you also think yourself indispensable to the world. My acquaintance with Job has enabled me to observe the gradual growth of so peculiar a character. My wife likes him, notwithstanding his ways, and he likes her (not unwisely nor too well), which may partly explain her attachment. With all his crotchets, he has a certain thoughtful consideration for others, which I have observed is a distinguishing trait of persons of his class, till they grow old. Until they are so old as to be rigid, they seem to be conscious that, to have their own exactions respected, they must yield correspondingly to the demands of others. This may be only the shrewdness of selfishness, but to women especially it is agreeable. I observe that exactly in proportion as Job insists upon the acknowledgment of his own peculiar notions, he yields a respectful assent to those he is indifferent

about. He has not yet attained that sovereignty of self-sufficiency which requires unqualified obeisance. When that is achieved he will have advanced beyond the understanding and indulgence of any but his own class, and will naturally surrender himself to it. That extremity you see illustrated now. It shows itself in a spirit of accommodation and tolerance which only themselves could acquire or practise. Observing their forbearance and politeness and kindness to each other, you would hardly suspect they could take each other in pieces, whim after whim, vanity after vanity, as a mechanician would his machine. But they know that the houses they live in are so vitreous that the bare thought of a stone terrifies them. Each poor conscious quivering bundle is so sensitive to exposure or handling as to trust itself only to assortment for security.

Rich and prosperous, and by virtue of circumstances controlling those about them, they very naturally feel uneasy that they are not

acknowledged omnipotent. That feeling as naturally leads them to disparage what they cannot control. They are annoyed to find that, much as wealth and prosperity have brought them, there is yet much more which is not purchasable. Nothing, for instance, surprises or plagues them more than a manly utterance, which goes crashing its way through their weak cobwebs of fears and conceits, by a man they never heard of as successful.

Their themes of conversation are suggested mainly by their prosperity and fears. Their oracular manner of disposing of all vexed questions would amuse you. Infatuated with their gains and successes, they are unfitted to judge for the millions who are struggling for personal liberty and independence. It would be extraordinary, situated as they are, if any one of them should entertain sentiments of generous breadth and humanity. The people they speak of as an unthinking mob, and are always ready with an argument in favor of limited suffrage. They think of the poor man

as a drudge or a ruffian, fit only for menial service or revolution. Hugging so tightly their accumulations, and so systematically hoarding to swell them, they naturally think their own attainment supremely the ambition of all, and morbidly reason themselves insecure in the possession of that which ninety-nine hundredths must desperately covet. Caste, therefore, in social and civil life, is associated with locks, in their shallow philosophy of protection. The man whom Souvestre describes as having a taste for poverty, is as much beyond their comprehension as an archangel. They think that tax-payers take care of most of those who are not. Of the infinite help the poor are to each other they never dream. They exaggerate the immunities of wealth, and grumble at the ballot because it will not vote them titles and arm them with special privileges. Every man in the public service, or who seeks to be, is characterized as a corrupt politician. Every one of them, they think, has his price, and the multitude will

not favor such as are not to be bought. The always hopeful and anxiously struggling masses they speak of as 'these people.' One of these very comfortable half-dozen, made wealthy by the growth of a thrifty and industrious population about him, putting fabulous prices upon the vacant land left him by his grandfather, riding one bright afternoon in the public park behind his splendid bays and servant in livery, was heard to say felicitously, with a grand wave of his gloved hand, as he passed the happy crowd on foot, gathered on the green listening to the music: 'How commendable, that the generous wealth of this opulent city has provided so delightful a place for all these people.' 'Such people,' he is nearly of belief, are of another genus than himself, which the excuse of a shadow or two in complexion would establish. That such people are permitted to vote, is a sufficient reason why persons of his class should not attend the polls. Not voting relieves them of all responsibility for bad government, and gives them a

sweeping license to complain. In their opinion, it is rather vulgar to vote, as those who do the voting are mainly vulgar. They prefer to keep themselves clean by avoiding such associations. If they do not exert themselves to elevate the people, they hold themselves not accountable for their degradation. The reply of the idle philosopher, that every one ought to give account of his actions, but not of his leisure, is their theory of responsibility. To hear them talk, you would discover that their idea of the best civilization is a perfect and unchangeable classification of society. They have all of them been 'abroad,' and express themselves delighted with the settled condition of every thing. They have concluded that society is happier if in every way limits are defined for it. Opening the future to every man, and giving him a fair chance, is, in their opinion, the cause of all the disorder and discontent in free America. The fact that every man is a possible law-maker and executive, is in their apprehension only a

premium upon tumult and anarchy. In the same sense they regard universal education as a disturbing influence, and find many reasons for believing the system of public schools perilous to the peace and safety of the State.

Their mode of making each other happy is not novel, but systematic. They are so kindly and graceful about it that the manner is almost as pleasing as the effect. Softly wrapped and calmly composed as they seem, they yet need to have their complacency occasionally reënforced. It has been my pleasure to be present frequently, and witness the delightful process. And you must know the charming result is additionally sweetened by the presence of a few who are not of the select number, as a dignified assemblage of any sort is put upon its good behavior and made to do its best by an audience. The admiration and envy which are understood to be excited in those who listen, reflect the chosen in grander proportions than their own estimate of themselves had approximated. These meetings for admiration, exalta-

tion, and manipulation, are so irregular as to appear accidental, and each is so natural, and easy, and self-adjusting, as to appear the first and only. The least show of art in their conduct would make them a caricature even to themselves, as an exhibition of magic to magicians would be ridiculous. The man under the table must be concealed if credulity and wonder are to be kept in countenance. You remember, long ago, in the old school-house, the explosive effect of the travelling astronomical lecturer attempting to illustrate the solar system by a squeaking planetarium.

It is only in times of agitation that the soothing oil is requisite. The first muttering of a tempest suggests the remedy. The appliances to tranquillize and felicitate are set in motion by a single shadow of trouble in one placid face. Doubloon, one of the six, has been unduly alarmed for the safety of an investment. An insurance company in which he has some shares has suffered by a sweeping fire. An occasion when all are together is

seized upon to put him back upon his plane of complacency. One by one his other investments are referred to, and presented in the most profitable light. His sagacity in possessing certain vacant lots is commended as remarkable, and he quite forgets his losses in his inestimable prospective gains. Meanwhile silent, he pulls his jacket over his round belly, and is contented. The machine is fairly started. Eagle, the glittering holder of bank stock, comes in next for a flood of admiration. No common man, it is agreed, Doubloon included, could have foreseen the happy accidents to finances which sent his shares to the highest figure on the list. Exalted and made easy, he is ready to join with the rest in complimenting Sovereign upon his wisdom in selecting such agencies as have converted his mines of anthracite into silver. No other man in the Republic could have selected so many men to represent him without being deceived in some of them. So exhibited, Sovereign sees himself in greater proportions than his ambition had ever endowed

him with. Adjusting his wig, he is all at once impressed with the aptitude of Slug for comprehensive commercial enterprises. The rest promptly agree with him in asserting that another man could not be found in the wide world who could so have anticipated the growth of cities on remote uninhabited shores. And Slug's imagination floats in succession the rich argosies which brought him his splendid opulence. Thaler, till now busy with sage commendations of the rest, has settled himself to receive his own share of encomium. Which seeing, Slug lifts himself, delighted, to the expected service. In Slug's opinion Thaler would have done as well or better with the same opportunities which he himself had seized with only qualified success. Thaler's stock operations proved, in the judgment of all, a breadth of wisdom and forecast, which, carried into grander schemes, would have brought him millions where he only realized thousands. His modesty in being contented with such small returns, when as well they might have been

prodigious, is rather berated than commended. Which general impression of boundless untried resources puts Thaler in such delightful exaltation, as to make him unconsciously push back the stiff linen about his neck to make room for his swelling person, till now a still absorbent of great opinions. And now only Napoleon, the imperial coin of the realm, remains to be lifted by generous loosened tongues to the top of possible human attainment. His phrases of praise have been the weightiest and most graceful, and deserve a return in kind, compounded. Serenely he listens to the sweet strains of Doubloon, Eagle, Sovereign, Slug, and Thaler, swelling together in liquid symphony. His successes, in the estimation of all, indicate not only wisdom, but prophecy. No man, a mere man, could have accomplished so much, and so easily. Events had always occurred as he predicted, and they all now see plainly their shortsightedness in not accepting him a seer. If his sagacity and wisdom had been occupied with public affairs, it is easy to

see how disastrous collisions between nations would have been avoided, and the highest civilization secured to peoples who seem going downward in darkness. And, all glowing, the six simultaneously rise, in unctuous plenitude of sweet praises. What wonder if for a week after they look out upon the fair world and wonder it is not fairer, and that better beings than 'these people' are not vouchsafed to minister to them.

VIII.

THE EXCHANGE.

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THE EXCHANGE.

THE common room, in which the multitude devour newspapers and tobacco, and talk and write furiously, is too remindful of sober events to linger in. All the great and little bubbles have representatives in it. The intelligent eye will readily classify them. The more desperate schemes are represented by men who elsewhere would pass for clergymen. They are not noisy, nor impatient, but can wait. They prefer to exhibit their maps or specimens or models in sumptuous private parlors, and only to those whose ears are nearest their pockets. Their schemes and services would be cheapened by a public display of them; besides,

they know that birds are not caught by shaking the net. These respectable-looking gentlemen have histories and habitations, which have no connection with present purposes, and are not referred to. Nothing, indeed, could so much disturb their equanimity as to meet unexpectedly those who have known them intimately. Old matters are so foreign from the new that they are loath to have them complicated. Their grand theories and projects of development, seeking great capital to try them, would be embarrassed by the exposure of only failure and fraud in other enterprises of theirs, quite as promising. They prefer to have their arguments of to-day stand for themselves, unshaken by illustrations from records of deception and ruin.

Dryden says, that when the nation boils the scum rises, the truth of which, it would seem, has been proven in the course of our war. In the general upheaval and trial of all the elements of society, the alert adventurers have reaped the advantages. Fixed interests might

be advanced, but the danger of their destruction was imminent. Even these were accommodated as far as possible to the prevailing spirit of speculation. Uncertainty fast became the rule, which every new issue of promises, every call for troops, every disaster in the field, helped to establish. Men most faithless in the future of the Republic seemed to thrive best in her darkest hours. After a bad defeat, the faithful citizen, sorrowing and silent, passing through assemblages of desperate speculators, such as at night crowded the more public rooms of the great hotels, and observing the crowd jubilant over calamity, suffered an insult to his patriotism which he must ever wonder he could endure.

That meek-looking man we met as we came in; did you notice him? He is a character I have observed with curious interest. He slid by as noiselessly as an apparition. His cat-footed tread, to those who hear it, tells his history. The only man who seems to know him has told me he is rich. You would not

suspect it to look at him. So much modesty and retirement of manner you never saw in a slave. His dress and accessaries betoken any thing but wealth. He is intelligent, but his thoughts have the shakiness of terror. Much as he knows, his life is a lie, and his knowledge is of little worth. He has sailed the Nile, crossed the Great Desert, inspected Pompeii, roamed over the Holy Land, explored the Catacombs, climbed Mont Blanc, domesticated in all the great cities, gone down under the ocean into the mines of Cornwall, been shipwrecked, escaped icebergs, more than all, travelled his own country, seeing its mountains, and caves, and rivers, and great personages, yet he steals about as if crime had been his occupation, and every victim was pursuing him. Alas, his only real enemies are the tax-gatherer and himself. His wealth is in securities, and the concealment of it is the mystery and burden of his life. He flits from country to country, from city to city, and is only long enough necessarily anywhere to gather his dividends.

His avarice and cowardice have made him shrink and cower till wretchedness and terror express themselves in every lineament and movement. The wreck of an intellect never looked out of a wasted body and empty brain more pitifully than this wretched creature begs concealment and obscurity from every shadow and every man the world over.

You are reminded of the trader's device, before the steamboat was invented, when the Southwest was infested with red men and robbers. Receiving specie at New Orleans for his produce, he put it in a wet buckskin belt of sufficient length to surround the body, which, as it dried, shrunk round the coin, till no amount of shaking would cause it to jingle. Just so is the humanity of this man shrunk round his possessions, till his heart never jingles with a manly impulse.

The middle man of the group before you, with the polished forehead, pulling his beard; observe him. He is a genius in speculation. So securely poised, his figure would suggest to

sculpture a statue of destiny. His spinal column must be in a direct line to the centre of the earth, so upright he appears. His leisurely generalizations have the freshness of original wisdom, and are compact enough for proverbs. So far above the ordinary plane, his easy guesses give an impression of prescience. All things in all lights, and his words the essence of all. The clatter of the squad in the corner over the decline in Erie, he hears as he does the oaths and glasses in the room adjoining. The mystery or peril, to the thoughtless talkers and drinkers invisible, is patent enough to him; he seems to know the motives of the manipulators, and to divine results. His presumption is so supreme that it confuses and blinds. So much composure must be the token of extraordinary wisdom. Ephemera, distinguishable from motes, accept him a sun, and flourish in his light, till the market turns. His own means are locked up, or he would risk them all in the scheme his judgment approves. If his friend, who approves also, and who is

so fortunate as to have some thousands loose, will let him take it and use it as he would his own, he shall share with him the profits. Of losses, nothing is said. If they occur, his friend will enjoy a monopoly, the philosopher perhaps losing a little in confidence. So he deceives, and betrays, and flourishes. In a clean skin, in fresh raiment, immaculate manners, and the repose of virtue, he is the incarnation of fraud, and he commands the admiration, if not the respect, of those he has defrauded. The man who just now touched his hat to him was nearly ruined by him, I know.

The scene revives events of the life and times of John Law. Anecdotes related by Thiers in his memoir of that incomparable schemer, are worth iterating, to illustrate the present, and show how history is repeated, after one hundred and fifty years. All classes of society, says the historian, mingled in the Rue Quincampoix, cherishing the same illusions, noblemen, churchmen, traders, quiet citizens, and servants, whom their suddenly

acquired fortune had filled with the hope of rivalling their masters. All the houses in the street had been converted into offices by the stock-jobbers; the occupants gave up their apartments, the merchants their shops; houses which had brought a rent of seven or eight hundred francs, were cut up into some thirty offices, and brought fifty or sixty thousand francs; stock-jobbing made itself felt in rents as in securities. A cobbler, who had converted his stall into an office by placing in it some stools, a table, and a writing-desk, rented it for two thousand francs a day. A humpbacked man, in the course of a few days, acquired one hundred and fifty thousand livres by letting out his hump as a writing-desk. The brokers organized themselves into regular swindling companies. They speculated upon the constant rise, but more often still upon the fluctuations which they had the skill to produce. They ranged themselves in a line in the Rue Quincampoix, ready to act at the first signal. At

the sound of a bell in the office of a man named Papillon, they offered, all at once, the shares, sold them, and effected a decline. At a different signal, they bought at the lowest price that which they had sold at the highest, and in this way brought about a reaction; thus they always 'sold dear and bought cheap.' The fluctuations were so rapid and so considerable, that brokers receiving shares to sell had time to make large profits by retaining them only one day. One is mentioned, who, commissioned to sell some shares, was absent two days. It was thought that he had stolen them. Not at all; he repaid the price faithfully, but meantime had made a million for himself. Servants became suddenly as rich as their masters. One of them, meeting his master walking in the rain, stopped his carriage to offer him a seat. A footman had gained so much that he provided himself with a fine carriage; but the first day it came to the door, he, instead of stepping into the vehicle, mounted up to his old station behind. Another,

in a similar predicament, brought himself well off by pretending he got up only to see if there was room on the back for two or three more lackeys, whom he was resolved to hire instantly. Law's coachman had made so great a fortune that he asked a dismission from his service, which was readily granted, on condition of procuring another as good as himself. The man therefore brought two coachmen to his master, both of them excellent drivers, and desired him to make choice of one, at the same time saying that he would take the other for his own carriage. One night at the opera, a Mademoiselle de Begond, observing a lady enter magnificently dressed, and covered with diamonds, jogged her mother, and said, 'I am much mistaken if this fine lady is not Mary, our cook.' The report spread through the theatre, till it came to the ears of the lady, who, coming up to Madame de Begond, said, 'I am indeed Mary, your cook. I have gained large sums in the Rue Quincampoix. I love fine clothes and fine jewels, and am accordingly dressed in

them. I have paid for every thing, am in debt to nobody, and pray what has any person to say to this?' At another time, some persons of quality beholding a gorgeous figure alight from a most splendid equipage, and inquiring what great lady that was, one of her lackeys answered, 'A woman who has tumbled from a garret into a carriage.' One Brignaud, son of a baker, one of the suddenly rich, being desirous of having a superb service of plate, purchased all the articles exposed for sale in the shop of a goldsmith for forty thousand livres, and sent them home to his wife, with orders to set them out properly for supper, to which he had invited many persons of distinction. The lady, not understanding the business, arranged the plate according to her fancy, and without regard to their real use; so that when supper was announced, the guests could not forbear from indulging in peals of laughter to see the soup served up in a basin for receiving the offerings at church, the sugar in a censer, and chalices

holding the place of salt-cellars, while most of the other articles were more suited to a toilet than a sideboard. Those who had become rich, rushed into those violent pleasures and excesses which the soul of a gambler craves; they displayed in their newly-acquired mansions that barbarous, monstrous luxury which signalized the age of Roman corruption.

These incidents, remember, word for word, are gathered, here and there, from the history of John Law and the Mississippi Bubble, Paris, Anno Domini, 1719. Yet the infatuated exalt the arts and conspiracies of the exchange as fresh inventions of genius, and the thoughtless pronounce their results unparalleled.

IX.

AN INMATE.

IX.

AN INMATE.

I know of nothing, my friend, which causes so much suffering as diseased sensibility. Persons of poetic nature, leading an insulated life, are sure to be more or less its victims. A remarkable instance came to my notice during the summer. Whence the solitary man came, who he was, no one knew, and no one had cared to know. 'He paid his bills, and appeared a gentleman,' was all they could say of him at the office. How my accidental acquaintance with him commenced, I cannot recall; but once begun, his siren sympathy and strange wisdom enthralled me. I saw him occasionally, perhaps too often, in his solitary

chamber, in his worst and sweetest moods. At times he kept me so vividly reminded of the Opium-Eater's awful Ladies of Sorrow—those impersonations of 'the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart'—as to make his presence as terrible as at other times it was charming. Now his eyes were 'sweet and subtle;' now they were 'filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium;' now they had 'the fierce light of a blazing misery.' At such times he was dumb to conscious utterance, and solemnly and profoundly abstracted. He paced his room or agonized in bed till the fearful fever or tempest was ended, and the cause of it all remained as dark as the hidden forces of nature we conjecture only from their effects.

I could see that he regarded the comfortable hotel as a sort of hospital for his malady. Nobody troubled him with questions. I once heard him say, sadly (he never was harsh), 'The last thing even the most sensible man

learns is not to ask questions.' The chamber-girl only, besides myself, seemed to know just when those attacks of himself, so to speak, began and ended. She stepped lightly by his door, and put a finger across her lips to repress any needless noise. Sometimes, during those tedious paroxysms, when his profound nature seemed 'upheaved by central convulsions'—when his heart trembled and brain rocked 'under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within'—he sent for me; but when they had passed, I went to him, unbidden. Going too suddenly in upon him one day, I found him sitting at the table, with a closed Bible in his hand. Pointing me to a seat, he said thoughtfully (I shall never forget his varying emphasis), with his eyes tenderly fixed upon the sacred volume: 'The way to Heaven in a book. Yes, the way to HEAVEN in a book. Yes, the way to Heaven IN A BOOK. Yes, the WAY to Heaven in a book. Yes' (with an emotional emphasis melting away all creeds), 'THE way to Heaven in a

book.' What more could be said, I thought, and have often thought since.

His talk upon the commonest topics, if he talked at all, was always refreshing and suggestive. He argued nothing; he seemed to have got beyond argument; seeing through all processes, and expressing only results. He was therefore never tedious, but always striking. Assuming that you knew as much as himself, and that therefore his conclusions must be yours, even the appearance of dogmatism he avoided. Talking with him, you would at times be even more surprised at yourself than at him; for his manner was so encouraging and inspiring as to give to your faculties a startling vigor, emancipating and translating you, mind and soul. When freest he seemed so free of the ordinary auxiliaries to thought, as to make you ashamed too much to rely upon them yourself. Unwittingly, too, you would tell your history, in your free utterances, as he told his own in his, if you but understood them. ('For history,' he once said,

'is not the story of the man's daily walk and tailor's bills, but of that real life, which we dare not with our lips tell any one. But, in little bits, it tells itself, in part; and so our friends love us. If it could utter itself wholly, would they, perhaps, hate us, or look at us with awe, as strange genii, issuing in fearful mist from the strong box of their friendship, into which they had locked us as common mortals.')

His faculties, in his best moods, had a delicacy and fineness, so to speak, only exceeded in his acute and trembling sensibility. Where his intellect could not penetrate, his universal sympathy seemed to admit him unquestioned. In life, his heart was with the weak and the struggling. In literature, his taste was most at home in the elevating and emotional. Once I heard him recite Coleridge's sublime Hymn to Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni, and all I loved and hoped seemed gathered about the summit of Mont Blanc. He seemed transported. When he repeated, with 'solemn air,'

the scene of family worship in the Cotter's Saturday Night, I found myself on my knees, by the little old chair, at the 'ingle side,' with mother, sisters, and brothers, forming 'a circle wide,' intent while 'the saint, the father, and the husband' prayed; and when he dwelt upon the passage where

> The parent pair their SECRET homage pay,
> And proffer up to Heaven the warm request
> That He who stills the raven's clamorous nest,
> And decks the lily fair in flowery pride,
> Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
> For them and for their little ones provide;
> But chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside;

I felt the tears of penitence and gratitude overflowing my eyes. In A' the airts the wind can blaw, I dearly like the West, he brought me my darling Mary of childhood. When he recited To Mary in Heaven, I heard the 'groans that rend the breast' of every distressed lover. In his repetition of the sweet poem, To the Mountain Daisy, I heard the inspiring song of the 'bonnie lark, wi'

speckled breast,' bending the 'crimson-tipped flower 'mang the dewy weet,' and 'upward-springing, blithe, to greet the purpling east.' But to hear him murmur, Come into the Garden, Maud, was a pleasure above description. The 'soul of the rose' went into his blood, and the 'breeze of the morning' moved in his voice. Led by the sentiment of the poet, he walked the garden, and the flowers greeted him. You heard the red rose cry, and the white rose weep, and the larkspur listen, and the lily whisper; and when there fell 'a splendid tear from the passion-flower,' one not less splendid broke over his illuminated face.

Sometimes he made verses—just to amuse himself, he said, as he would play a game of solitaire. If these I quote show the elevation and tone of his feelings when most elastic and expressible, you may guess their depth and darkness when unutterable:

* * * * * *

Seem'st thou never worn nor weary,
Never sad or never dreary;
Weights of others always bearing,
Griefs of others always sharing.
Heart so tender, timid never,
Hands so gentle, willing ever;
Wounds of thine in strength concealing,
Wounds of others always healing.

The stricken heart could not endure,
Thy love withheld, its balm and cure;
Despairing want could hope no more,
Thy kindness lost, its trusted store.
The sun obscured, the sickly plant
But feels the more its every want;
An hour of cloud, it yields to blight,
Despairing ever of the light.

Tongue of distress, never so dumb,
Utters its plaint when thou dost come;
Assured at least a kindly ear,
A tender blessing and soothing tear.
The burden off, the eyes of care
Brighten and beam as heaven were there;
Smoothed the pillow, the throbbing brain
Survives the pang and sleeps again.

One morning I missed him. Inquiring at the office, they said he had departed. Inquiring further, sometime after, I learned, alas, that he had departed—this life—by his own hand.

X.

NOT A SERMON.

X.

NOT A SERMON.

'Sir,' said he, the strange man, at the end of our last long interview, 'my words are not to teach you, but to refer you to what you know. If you can be taught by preaching, they are not for you. Results, not processes, teach. If they do not show their own growth, narrate their own histories, they are not such, or you do not apprehend them. You are understood to see in a gray hair the vicissitudes of a life. You are presumed to know goodness by its fruits, and how utter is sorrow which is unutterable.

'The mother may make the boy, but the man must make himself, and the man will be

as incomprehensible to his mother as to his friend. Precepts are so often written in water, while experiences infix themselves as by the point of a diamond. The scar from a wound got in a failing effort, or the great throb felt upon possession of a soul-sought object, will make us shun or pursue as no words could, however wise or sagacious. We bow to the wisdom of King Solomon's preaching, but do not account for the apostasy of his son Rehoboam.

'The father would have his daughter always immaculate. Her companions he sees as she cannot see them. She does not see them at all. Her eyes are not opened upon them with that view. He knows if they are meet before she has begun to ask herself. The false or corrupt book he has stolen an enjoying glance at himself, he would put from her as certain death. He sees in her the wife, and mother, and guardian of a home. He knows that the truth, and fidelity, and virtue, are not only good in themselves, but that they are neces-

sary to save society from wreck. His anxieties do not so much result from a love of the good and the right, as from a consciousness of evils and perils to be avoided and escaped.

'The fixed expression and filling eye of the parent when the lover of his daughter asks her in marriage, are profoundest mysteries to the youthful petitioner. He cannot conceive the mirage of twenty years of peaceful and tragic life which that moment looms in the vision of the parent, and strains to painful tension his faculties of memory and reflection. The child is seen at every stage of growth and development, from babyhood to maturity, with every obstacle and temptation which beset her path, and every hope and triumph and rapture which inspired it. He has just learned how entirely she is made up of himself, and himself of her, and how completely her marriage will change their relations with each other and all the world. Her happiness and progress and purity have enlisted his life, and no part of his life worth any thing is separable

from hers. He is asked to surrender the object of every hope, anxiety, and emotion, and trust her to the guidance of blindness and chance. His dumb face and the falling tear are emblems of his life as at that moment he feels it must be when she is gone.

'Death is as great a wonder to Youth as life is to Age. Youth is ever growing and realizing. His look into the sunless grave is blank and bewildered. His round eyes and radiant face are set upon an upward, sunny path. No blow of disappointment has staggered his expectation, and left an eternal mark upon him. He employs no spies, and advances without scouts. He has not learned the uses of treachery and caution. Easy advancement has made him bold and confident. He believes the future is in his fist. He does not know that so far all helps have been supplied him, and will continue to be supplied, till he fails. The fledgling, left to flutter alone, is hopefully and trustingly observed by those who know forces and currents. Humanity has generously

opened a way and given him a start. His sails belly with all good wishes. The world would not have him fail. It will not give up its faith in its best ideal. Individuals acknowledge they have failed, but they do not quite get their consent to believe that an individual may not exist who cannot fail. If the one well-remembered fatal thing done or omitted had been omitted or done, they might have been such themselves. The possible man who cannot err nor blunder, and who cannot be betrayed nor baffled, is the universal Messiah. Wisdom, dumb and grave, and Experience, with doubt and discouragement in every wrinkle, forget truth and life, lose themselves in the contemplation of his beautiful vigor and fleetness, and believe him invincible. They look through the long past, and see themselves in the fascinating being. Prodigy and miracle. Figure erect—limbs round—veins full and hot—skin glistening—hair shaking out the sunshine. So full of bounding life that his sleep must be disturbed by ravish-

ing dreams of to-morrow. Suggestion of dangers in his way would be insufficient to put him on his guard, if time were allowed to hear it. He must learn obstacles by confronting them, and encountering them one at a time, his strong right arm is strengthened by striking them down. He makes a joke of armor and defences, and calls deliberation or hesitation weakness. But one day Fraud or Paralysis strikes, and new eyes are suddenly given him. He sees so many doubts and difficulties in his way, that he can hardly determine to move at all. He learns a new language, and applies new names. He discovers motives, and dizzies trying to sound them. His anxieties and disappointments are hooks in his side which turn him over and over in his bed. Abstraction puzzles him. He will be seeing things without their disguises, and the habit soon becomes his character. Dealing so much with shams and devices, he comes to suspect even the genuine and real, and feels daily the gradual decay and death of the ardor, ingen-

uousness and confidence which ennobled and inspired the best part of his life. His penetration and suspicious second-sight make him acquainted with the little arts and artifices of his fellows, and he acquires a certain strength and mastery by appropriating them. But such a bundle of weaknesses he feels must fall apart. Such an embodiment of frailties, instincts, little qualities, little faculties, and distrust, cannot last. Made up in great part of what is worn out, debauched, wasted, and worthless, the most natural thing, he thinks, is that it should die.

'An attempt by law-makers to define motives, and by judges to punish them, would be puzzling occupation. Penances and penalties can only be affixed to them by ourselves and Omniscience. To a self-observant man nothing can be more interesting and surprising than his own, as they appear to himself, and as they are interpreted by others. Often they seem wholly beyond his comprehension or control. They are prompted he does not always know how nor why, and will lead him he

cannot tell where. Their meanness often humiliates him, and he uses the utmost caution and carefulness to conceal them. His complacency is only preserved by a consciousness of the world's ignorance of them. Better motives than the real ones are often attributed to him, which both satirize and dignify his conduct. His greatest achievements often spring from motives so insignificant that he would be ashamed to acknowledge them. His apparent and exemplary virtues would lose much of their effect if the secret crimes which alarmed them into exercise were exposed. Worse motives are also found for his conduct than ever entered his heart, the possession of which would make him a different man. If conspicuous good to others result from an act meant primarily to benefit himself, his sagacious benevolence is praised, and his character accepted a model. If wrong be incidentally or intentionally done his neighbor through his neighbor's simplicity or ignorance, his conscience is soothed by the protecting

statute. He has been annoyed by an ostentatious recognition and acknowledgment of acts, with a parade of assumed systematic intentions, when the real ones so spontaneously sprung from his humanity that design or calculation was impossible. Their intrinsic goodness was so disparaged and obscured by misinterpretation and flaunting that their promising fruit was stinted in the growth. The sweeter virtues, crushed into life, are embarrassed by being displayed. The silent tear which attends their birth drops away in shame at being discovered.

'Life, in the remote country, is simple, and does not stimulate exertion. Wants are few and inexpensive. Much money is not needed to get all we desire. It is only when civilization is seen at its centres, where skill and taste and treasure have accumulated incalculable objects of beauty and comfort, that we apprehend how much there is to enjoy, and how much is required to purchase it all. New and extraordinary incentives to wealth are

awakened by the exhibition of its uses. The wants created by the education and stimulation of our senses and sensations soon become exacting and insatiable, and our efforts to satisfy them astonish us by their continuity and desperation.

'If an apprehension of the many objects of sensuous and esthetic enjoyment in this life makes us so prodigiously diligent in the accumulation of the means to enjoy them, how much the more would an unwavering belief in an immortal life of delight and progression make us diligent in the acquisition of the loves and virtues, without which we must lack the resources and capacities to enjoy its beatitudes. As cities awaken and quicken a desire for wealth by exhibiting so many desirable objects which only money can buy, so an abiding belief that in the immeasurable future our enjoyment of its prerogatives and felicities will depend upon our fitness and preparation for them, would inspire the utmost diligence in laying up treasures for Heaven. With the

thought of a future existence perpetually present, and the belief that this fleeting life is only for purposes of discipline and culture, all love of ostentation and applause would be precluded. By those whose lives and aims are fitted for this world and limited to it, are its rewards and honors most sought and esteemed. The simple offices and acquisitions of virtue and goodness, which make little sign and are ill-recognized by men, win the smile which beams immortally.

'As we live, and enjoy, and grow, how content we should be to give up what we have, with a certainty that hence our joys and capacities will be increased and perpetuated. The primer must be laid aside for the next book in the course, which will include it. The forms fall away, but the spirit passes. The chaff, which protected and rounded the wheat, is left to perish after the winnowing. Discipline and processes, desiderata now, if we grow at all, must become gyves. We must put off and put on, until all auxiliaries be-

come unnecessary under the guardianship of the Infallible.

'If we truly believed and realized that here we begin to be what we are to be ever, how absorbing and resourceful life would be. How conscientiously and persistently we would seek the good and avoid the evil. How suspiciously and jealously we would guard ourselves against all which must perish with the body, and how anxiously cultivate all which must survive it. Happiness would not be sought in its transient forms. Life would be appreciated for its resultant uses. The duty of the hour would be the duty of eternity. The good would inhere. The present would be realized as the time to work in; and having something to do worth doing, we should need all the time we have to do it well. The duties of to-day faithfully discharged, we would not concern ourselves about to-morrow. To-morrow would be so far provided for that it would be anticipated and made easy, if it come. Refinement and tenderness and excellence would

result from fidelity to duty, and a happiness would be established as serene as it would be unconscious. Living and acting, and getting the pleasure and good of life in duty, we should enjoy a foretaste of fruition and perpetuity.'

XI.

HAPPINESS.

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About midnight. Mrs. Allgot has just come in, attended by her accredited escort, the accomplished Captain. They have been to the opera, and have stopped an hour at a French restaurant to refresh themselves. Elegantly attired and faithfully attended, she has been the admiration of all. Her diamonds sparkle, but do not outshine her brilliant black eyes, retouched with a dazzling lustre by the fat oysters and half-bottle of Gold Seal. The good-humor and fondness of both are overflowing, but they repress themselves in good taste, and separate politely. Good old Mr. Allgot, the happy husband of so much ra-

diancy, alone in his chamber and sweet bed, has had three solid hours of dreamless slumber, and would be a churl to complain of a little disturbance by her who at the court of fashion has conferred upon him so much distinction. Thoughtful and sympathizing, he cannot but participate the pleasure of unlacing and disrobing, after so many hours of tension and splendor. His dull ears, if they hear the rustling silks, only echo the admiration they have excited, and he is less disturbed than the many who envy her. Instead of the splashing water agitating his nerves, he feels them soothed in the balmy refreshment it gives to her throbbing temples. The powder out of her hair, and robed in her immaculate linen, she feels in every fibre of her youthful person the exquisite joy of a convalescent. Overcome and spent, what to her are the square limbs and knotted joints of the kind old man by her side? In the needed sleep will come back to her the caressing kindness of the Captain; a thousand eyes will reflect her splendor; and

the generous wine, pervading her blood with a subtle warmth, will lift the curtain of her dreams upon more than earthly ravishment. A remembered swell of music will transport her to rapturous heights, and a white cloud float her to elysium. If her muttered words and agitated slumber keep the old man awake, he remembers that youth is dreamy, and he would not have his chamber dreamless. If he grow tired of the bed when his young darling is most enamoured of it, his accustomed early walk will relieve them both. If he move carelessly, in the dim light of the morning, amongst her splendid robes, his crushing them will stir her less than the slightest ordinary contact; for his opulence bought them, and can buy a thousand, more splendid. The soft dawn upon her mellowing bosom reflects itself in the mirror as he dresses himself, and his pure taste discovers only beauty in the picture, which touching her never so gently would only disturb. The landscape on the wall beyond, he thinks,

is not more irradiated by the morning flush than her sleeping beauty.

Ah, sweet are the uses of civility, and a rough arrangement society would be without it. Feeble as we discover ourselves to be, and too short-lived, with the best faculties, to get much wisdom, we find in it our most convenient solace at last. (It may sometimes be carried doubtfully far, as in the case of indulgent old Galba, 'who, having entertained Mæcenas at supper, and seeing his young wife cast tender glances, and complot love by signs, let himself sink down upon his cushion, like one in a profound sleep, to give opportunity to their fondling; which he himself handsomely confessed; for at the same time a servant making bold to filch a vase that stood upon the table, he frankly cried: Hold, you rogue. Do you not see that I sleep only for Mæcenas?') The apparently incongruous companionships we sometimes see must find their bond of union in a generous civility. Some cynic has said there could be no happy mar-

riage but betwixt a blind wife and a deaf husband, which the bliss of this couple disproves. Their liberality forbids them seeing or hearing what might excite distrust or jealousy. His experience and age have taught him the folly of monopoly. Her beauty and youth, so generally acknowledged, have taught her the meanness of selfishness. 'Small is the worth of beauty from the light retired.' She must 'suffer herself to be desired, and not blush so to be admired.' He rejoices in his ability to load her with laces and jewels, and she also. His frailty has taught him humility, and he is glad of his wealth as a resource for her affections. It was natural, in the fulness of his possessions, and her ardor to share them, for him to forget the trifle of manhood. Something is sure to be forgotten, even by the wisest, in the tumult of the tender passion. Tithonus, you know, in love with Eos, asked to be made immortal, that he might love her forever, but forgot, in his ardor, to ask the little essential of perennial youth. Finding

himself maimed, and left 'to dwell in presence of immortal youth, immortal age beside immortal youth, and all he was in ashes,' and deploring that the gods could not recall the terrible gift, asked to be changed, and in pity was, into a grasshopper.

The worldly philosophy of Balzac, that there are few happy couples but couples of four, if ever true, would appear to be, in a certain sense, in this instance. The old gentleman has formed many attachments, beginning with his teens and increasing with his years, which are now so essentially a part of him that existence would be dreariness without them. The object of an early passion, living in the next street, for many years the wife of an India merchant, whom he every day visits, and whose society revives every pleasant memory, may be counted the first and tenderest. With her, he is oblivious of the events of fifty years, and lives over again the halcyon period when the world was best and wisest. His young hopes blossom again in retrospec-

tion. If his relations with her be marked by a touch of tenderness, it is but the response of a thousand memories, and is too sacred ever to be impure. A jest upon it would give him a wound which nothing could heal. Its enjoyment is the compensation for unnumbered ills. Any thing may be referred to but that; that never unkindly. Too hallowed the cherished intercourse for defence or discussion. Another of his attachments is an old friend, with whom, in early years, he was associated in prosperous business. With him, the schemes and perils of trade are revived, and he is reminded of his energies and successes. Every crisis in their joint enterprises is again and again worked through, and every difficulty seems ever as hard as when their master minds and wills overcame it. Reviewing any one of their achievements the thousandth time, they forget their infirmities, and walk the room with the tread of conquest and defiance. The old fire and purpose flash out of their eyes, and all obstacles, so petty and contemptible, melt

away. Rejuvenated by this heroic process, 'Old Allgot' is not to be despised, nor his fellow-champion either. If the latter be a little disagreeable on account of unfortunate habits, he is not to be disparaged nor offended. So great a resource as his society 'twould be perilous to obstruct. It must be permitted as often and as long as either elect, without questioning or impatience. And his ailments, too, are attachments, which he cannot quit if he would. Formed late in life, long after the tenderer ties, they are just as tenacious and exacting. A lumbago, which so long has affectionately hugged his loins, claims much of his time and attention, and much gentle manipulation and consideration are required to soothe it. And an asthma has crept into his throat, modulating his voice, and making his respiration too sensible to himself and to others. As a profligate son, they must be endured, and a civil and accommodating treatment is necessary to make them tolerable. These and other peculiar ties and affections, requiring so much

civility and consideration, have in turn made him considerate and civil. Especially have they made him so to his blooming wife. And he has discovered with pleasure that about in proportion to his liberality and license are her patience and kindness. Her unembarrassed relations with the prudent Captain, instead of diminishing her love, have increased it. Before the pleasant acquaintance was formed, she seemed at times a little indifferent to her husband; but now her fondness for him is always demonstrative. Under such circumstances he would be ungrateful to deny her any thing. She is too brilliant to shine for him only. The splendor of her charms would pale if limited to the twilight of decline. Her volatility and vitality would be sure to weary under the continued weight of his heaviness. The Captain, for his fidelity and circumspection, commands his admiration and gratitude. He is delighted that his lovely wife has found so suitable and trusty a friend. So nearly of an age, and so much alike in tastes and tem-

perament, they seem inevitably to have come together. Her better nature is cultivated by the Captain's many good offices, and her civility and tenderness to her husband are a thousand times increased by the repeated indulgence of her gushing humors.

[You remember the lines of Waller, On One Married to an Old Man, which we laughed over before we became philosophers:

Since thou wouldst needs (bewitched by some ill charms),
Be buried in those monumental arms,
All we can wish is—May that earth be light
Upon thy tender limbs; and so good-night.]

XII.

POOR BODIES.

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POOR BODIES.

In these material times, when every demand is supplied, the fashionable doctor is an indispensable luxury. I encounter him often, in halls and drawing-rooms. He lives in a palace, and fares sumptuously. His carriage at any house goes far to fix the rank of the occupant. He is not to perform miracles, as the world is now too wise to expect the miraculous. The human machine is admitted to be frail, and destined to go to pieces. The house of clay is only to be kept in such repair as to be presentable and comfortably habitable till abandoned. It was not made to resist earthquakes nor time. Only the every-day storms

and ills may be averted or cured. The one great shock or poison which shatters or rots the structure, the wisest cannot forefend nor baffle. Therapeutics, unfortunately, is not so exact as anatomy. Bones and veins and muscles, the same in all men, once discovered, are facts, and, with the aid of chloroform, the medical carpenter may cut and saw his poor fellow with certainty. But the million influences of climate and appetite and passion upon these human bodies, as varied by predispositions and habits and ambitions as they are numerous, are past finding out mathematically, and sometimes may only be guessed at, as the turns of the stock-market, or the whims of insanity. From the beginning, notwithstanding, the best intellects have been worn and wasted to discover symptoms and invent remedies. In their zeal and preoccupation, pondering the possible, they naturally overlooked the inevitable. In their ardor and sincerity, what wonder that they attempted to fasten by terms and theories what was too illusive for apprehension without

them, and what wonder that they founded, and dying men patronized, schools to utilize and perpetuate it. Upon a sea of speculation, in doubt and darkness, with only a few obscure truths bundled into theories, they confidently worked to conclusions, but with as little real knowledge of the mystery they sought to explore as the squirrel displays of navigation, who, upon a bit of wood, with his tail spread, floats before the wind. Down the ages, with the drift of superstition, have descended the little fragments of fact, till the accumulation is voluminous. Every school of medicine has its philosophers and zealots; and of its numerous practitioners, those who do not defend it with ardor are exceptional. The system they have espoused must be right till abandoned. Wedded to mercury, cold water, or infinitesimals, they are sworn systematically to prescribe, whatever the accident or extremity. Wholly committed and in earnest, professional pride becomes an essential of personality, and a certain symptom demands

a certain remedy, or risks the character. A dose to the grain is defended by the proud physician as the honor of his household, and the sturdiness of opinion which such championship of minutiæ is apt to beget becomes as often inconvenient as disagreeable. Such a man will not be trifled with. Sincere, and devoted to his calling, he will not accommodate himself to pretences nor whims. A professional call means sober business, and his sense of duty commands candor. If indolence or indulgence or vice be the cause of ailment, he frankly announces and characterizes it. The cherished habits, appetites, or desires, must be abandoned before he can begin a cure of their result. Trained to directness of expression as well as of thought, he can hardly describe their effect upon the body without suggesting their blight inevitably and forever upon the character. A faithful physician he believes should be an honest man, and concealment or assumed ignorance he will not admit inseparable from the art of healing. He will

continue to visit a-foot, and live in a hired house, rather than be rich at the expense of integrity and self-respect.

That interesting character to whom I refer is of another sort and purpose. Consulting only his convictions, he might belong to any of the schools, or none of them, confessedly. His views are material and commercial, and he is willing that the money his profession brings him should measure his ability. Strong beliefs would be inconvenient, and might mount him upon a hobby. Shrewdly occupied with other people's hobbies, one of his own would be sure to embarrass him. The thing of all things he would avoid is a conviction which could make him dogmatic. Free from attack through having nothing abstract to defend, he readily secures the patronage of every folly by not opposing it. Cognizant of the higher impulses of humanity, he does not forget that but one of many is controlled by them, and his vigilance for the main chance adapts him to the multitude. The patrons of his choice

would be above the average of men if he could have enough of them; but as society at large will not be elevated to his standard of fancy, he contents and secures himself by accepting it as it is. He prefers to pitch himself to the common rather than the moral sense, that being the more apprehensible and merchantable. Souls that are regular and strong in themselves, he believes, with Montaigne, are so rare as not justly to have name nor place among men, and considers the time nearly lost in endeavoring to please them. Besides, to attain and maintain their altitude of reason would require a hard and constant effort of intellect, and would unfit him for close observation and appropriation of the instincts and artifices of the general level, where the genius of the shopkeeper is the standard. The great are exceptional, and may not easily be turned to account, while the ordinary are everywhere, and ever in market. The little things of life engross it, and with them he must deal. Everybody is to have a last sickness, but he would

prefer never to have a patient in that extremity. The numerous little ailments which annoy life more than they endanger it, but which steadily swell the doctor's bank balance, are easily manageable by simple remedies, if indeed they need medical treatment at all. To these his arts are adapted, to be estimated and perpetuated in running accounts. If only so fortunate as to be able to confine his practice to them, the life of every patient would attest his ability. Alas, he cannot always dally with the trifling; he must sometimes face the terrible; but in the dreadful extremity he finds safety in counsel. Only sharing the responsibility, his reputation cannot be much endangered. No matter if the dying man still trusts in him; the poor fellow has received the last visit; the living friends who surround are to be retained as patrons; and it might be fatal if he alone were remembered with the calamity.

So perfect a type of his class, Jack, is this man, it were necessary you should see him

often, and know him as well as any one may, justly to admire him. If you were here I could almost wish you a little sick to secure you a close observation. To know him as your friends know you, no man can; but most persons who meet him think they know him perfectly at once. Devoting himself to the study and use of their weaknesses, he acquires a peculiar influence over them. As a hunter, he pursues his game with a full pack of passions and intuitions trained to his will. Men, he reasons, are indolent and ambitious, with instincts and impulses ever ready to supply the lack of labor and exalted purposes, and unawares they become artful and mean. Habitually deceiving, they expect deception, and prefer it. The skeleton truth is distasteful. Dressed according to mode, it is only presentable. His study is to find out what will suit, and to adapt himself accordingly. He takes the hue of whatever is contiguous. He dances with them that dance; puffs presumption; apologizes for ignorance; excuses

hypocrisy; fawns to avarice; applauds every device of ugliness to entrap beauty; listens to gossip in a manner to excite new wonder; winks at slander with a kindly smirk; gives a roguish twinkle at fashionable pruriency and villany; swells his cheeks expanding evanescent bubbles which complacency and pride have invented to conceal their emptiness; in a word, is ever every thing to everybody, and never himself. He is too well drilled to fear an exposure of his semblances. He scents up characteristics, and assumes them so well, it may be said he improves them in the acting. An adept in counterfeiting, he is quick to detect counterfeits; and while his coin is so perfect as always to pass, society can never impose upon him a baubee which is not genuine. If thrown with violence against angularity, his india-rubber character never receives a wound in the collision. The only individual he encounters to whom he cannot conform himself is that fortunately rare nuisance of well-bred society, an artless man, with a clear

eye for the truth, and a tongue to utter it; who is so indelicate and uncivil as not to confine himself to representations on the stage of life, but obtrudes into the green-room, and sees the faults and follies of the actors, and the difficulties and miseries of rehearsal; who strips philosophy of cant; poetry of extravagance; painting of unnatural tints; dogmatism of ignorance; elegance of mockery; distinction of props; diplomacy of ambition; in fine, sees society as it is, undraped by the fictions which pass for society itself. Such a man to him is fearful. In such a presence, his smiles are ghastly, and his sinuous tongue shrinks into coil, and only hisses.

To a philosopher, like yourself, who could observe without impatience, so perfect an achievement in art would be pleasing. I think of you always when he makes my wife a visit. Women, you know, even the best of them, will have their way in some things; always in the choice of a physician. The points of merit must be invisible to our reason.

I will not think my wife so weak a creature as to be charmed by his graces; she thinks too much of me to believe in them wholly. His rich equipage and faultless manners cannot be all that she sees. There must be a soul of sympathy or ken of wisdom somewhere or somehow visible, or her fine sense has failed her for once. One scene I shall remember while memory of her remains to me. The poor sufferer had been pulled and torn by pain all night, and in the morning, when the paroxysm left her, she was exhausted. Feebly but often she looked at the clock, anxiously counting the minutes till the doctor's arrival. At length he came, and his presence seemed a benediction. His confidential manner and sublime tact compounded a remedy above the skill of the apothecary. His few words, less interrogative than magnetic, seemed to reach the source of anguish, and run through the nerves with vitalizing energy. His hand touched her temple and caressed a pitiful lock as gently as could sunshine or zephyr. Not a

word of drugs; but a few well-chosen ones of to-morrow and rejoicing promise. Closing the west window a little, and opening the southern as much, the air was of a softer climate. Hopeful and composed, with a sweet torpor upon her eyelids, he left her—as unconsciously to her as her consciousness. For three hours she slept like a baby, and awoke a new spirit. The scene for some reason reminded me, and always reminds me, of an old experience; perhaps they may illustrate each other. Not at all well, I could not improve on account of business anxieties. My first venture, upon the success of which my whole future seemed to depend, had reached a crisis, and my emotions were in a tumult, and had been for days. All my energies had been expended to secure a favorable result, and I could only wait. Not that I needed his skill, but to be occupied for a few long minutes, I had dropped into the easy-chair of the village barber and yielded to his pleasant manipulations. Unexpectedly and suddenly I fell into a profound sleep, and

when I awoke, an hour afterward, the faithful and kindly son of Ham was still at work, but with a fan—meantime having gently lifted me, chair and all, between the open door and window, and disposed my legs and arms for the long forgetfulness. Ever since the world has looked brighter. The scheme of business worked well; but its failure, and all the skill or ridicule of learned doctors could never have made me forget or underrate the thoughtful and feeling barber.

Men and women, Jack, are poor creatures, and do not care to be stared at through microscopes. Their hearts sore, and faculties weary, they want to be humored and petted. In every man's heart are there not apartments forever locked, the keys forever lost, into which he himself never enters but by a skeleton? The central motive which has harmonized the efforts of a life, and the misfortune which has tempered it, are not to be hunted with the realist's dark-lantern, nor spitted for scientific scrutiny. Personality is within the life as the

world sees it, and not to be invaded if all the resources of that life can protect it. Of this no one can be more perfectly aware than the fashionable doctor. To appearances he is most considerate and respectful, while with the concealed and unutterable he makes merchandise. A large proportion, and the most substantial, of his patients, for instance, are only growing old, but they submit to be drugged and drugged, rather than once to be told the wholesome truth. The slight weaknesses and aches, as natural as gray hairs and dim eyesight, pride of life and the physician's arts dignify into illnesses. Thin locks and spectacles are natural enough, and well enough, and rather becoming; but flattening muscles and cooling circulation are results of over-work or imprudence, and may be restored to roundness and comfortable temperature. The doctor's wise prescription is higher living and heavier flannel, with powders and drops now and then as alteratives and tonics, and just soon enough, to a visit, he conducts the delicate case, as they say, to

a favorable issue. The air of southern Europe is recommended if his patient's patience seems failing, or if, as the real case may be, the ill taste of a stubborn husband is to be corrected. Many of his patients, who are given to gayety and irregular hours, are too frail to bear children, and his bare hint of the fact is of profit to the monster in a palace whose specialty is such cases. Expressionless eyes and dulness would contrast with diamonds and thin dresses, and stimulants in every form are suggested to supply the needed lustre and sprightliness, and complete the harmony. Small potions at first are sufficient; and if gradual increase of quantity result unfortunately, the misfortune is disease, to be treated by a still further increase of the cause as a remedy. If the public voice be silenced by the presence of crime in so many households; if brothels spring up palatially in desirable streets; if hospitals multiply to exhaust the public purse; the fashionable doctor, who is the genius and patron of them all, is secure in his fame and opulence.

XIII.

POOR SOULS.

XIII.

POOR SOULS.

But the creature-comfort of all—the sweet meat of the turtle—ripened and seasoned to the appetite of worldliness—is the fashionable parson. Prized according to price, as every other luxury, he is solace and nourishment to the fortunate who can purchase. In all the variety of his genus, he is the rarity and perfection.

The poor have the gospel preached to them according to their ways and wants, and taste is less a requisite with them than earnestness. Their 'school of wisdom' being the 'school of misery,' they are prepared for honesty, even if it goes to the sources of badness, and are

not disappointed if it grates as it goes. Their lives being simple and transparent, in any soft or ingenious disguise to cover or excuse selfishness, they suspect deceit or cowardice. Life has been too much in earnest, and every little want of it too much a fact, to let them long or very far from its realities. Every muscle and pore has too habitually paid the price of every necessity to permit them ignorance of intrinsic values. If frugality in them has been a 'substitute for ambition,' it has taught them to esteem humanity. If sacrifice has put a high value upon their little accumulations, dependence has taught them a willingness to share them. The Saviour, in the midst of the multitude, saw the poor widow making her way to the treasury to deposit her two mites—'all that she had, even all her living.' The lifting eye of thankfulness, dropping a tear when lifted, is easily fixed upon the Throne, at whose right hand there is fulness forever. To the broken-hearted and penitent, graces of speech but obscure, and strong

figures weaken. To them, as to poor Yorick, to preach, to show the extent of the preacher's reading, or the subtleties of his wit, tinselled over with a few words which glitter, but convey little light and less warmth, is a dishonest use of the poor single half hour in a week which is put in his hands; 'tis not preaching the gospel, but himself. They would rather have five words directed point-blank to the heart. To them, language, as every other help, is so limited to necessity, that in expressing a want they as little think of the words as of the atmosphere by which they see. A good word and kind hand, offered in fellowship and fraternity, will do more to ease the heavy burden and widen the narrow road, than all the arts of rhetoric. Ever consciously dependent, they but the more securely trust to guidance, and esteem this hard life an advantage if it but keep them in the way to a better. Misfortune and penury, driven into side-streets and obscurity, are warmed by the sun, and specially blest. The little mission

church is the temple of the New Jerusalem. The best viands of the beggar are the offal of excess. The last picking is sweetest, being nearest the bone. Opulence, which denies itself nothing, feels independent, and trusts in its ability to supply itself with every thing. Indigence, which has nothing, is grateful for any thing. Plenty is full-handed, and feels it can make its own terms. Poverty reaches an empty hand to God, and is so near the Giver as to get and realize all the good of the gift.

A thousand times you have read The Deserted Village, and as often turned back to read again that best description in literature of a good minister. If enough like him had lived upon the earth to preach all the sermons, and solemnize all the marriages, and baptize all the children, and compose all the loved ones in their last sleep, what a different world this would be.

A man he was to all the country dear;
And passing rich with forty pounds a year.
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place;

Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour.
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize—
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools who came to scoff remained to pray.

To relieve the wretched was his pride,
And even his failings leaned to virtue's side—
But in his duty, prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all:
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

You and I are both old enough to remember those heroes in the ministry, who went with the axe and civilization into the forests; who climbed mountains, swam rivers, and fought savages and wild beasts and hunger, to carry the Word to the careless or erring or wretched in every cabin. How different, think you, were they, and are their successors

generally, from the petted favorite of a rich church in an opulent city, whose membership and attendants sail the dizzying maelstrom of fashion, and move omnipotently in the mysteries of markets and corporations. The old metal of orthodoxy, in the same tone and measure for ages, has hammered out impressively: 'Saved by grace—saved by grace—saved by grace;' but the full chime in the splendid temple, in tones agreeable to ears accustomed to melody, liberally varies it: 'Taste—taste—saved by taste—saved by taste.' The occupant of the carved pulpit, 'whose wants are only imaginary, kneels upon cushions of velvet, and thanks gracious Heaven for having made the circumstances of all mankind so extremely happy.' Material demands upon him being paid by checks upon his banker, he is profoundly ignorant of the petty shifts of the multitude. Here and there, in the pews nearest the pulpit, repose in fresh raiment and elegance, representatives of every institution of finance and commerce, and their joint pos-

sessions impress him with the fulness of beneficence. To illustrate his theme, he is not limited to average experience, but is expected to range beyond and above it. He is understood to know the world in an enlarged way; and if his figures or examples suggest the successes or power of his hearers, their complacency is stimulated if their hearts are not softened. He is not to shock by an exposure of subtlety which circumvents, or combination which oppresses, but to soothe by a glittering exhibition of ends and attainments. The possession of money, in whatever prodigious quantity, is not to be questioned, but only the love of it. A little ingenuity will comfort the possessor by suggesting his expenditures, and make him for the time being as conspicuous in the sanctuary as his equipage makes him in the avenue. Wretches, in degradation and sores, are not to be exposed to eyes accustomed to beauty and plenitude, but the great establishment provided for them is displayed and admired exhaustingly in all the terms of

descriptive architecture. The rheumy mendicant is at home in the beautiful hospital, happy with his fellows, and generous taxation, not importunity, sustains him. Cases of individual suffering are covered from view by the general provision, the sight of which would only disgust or humiliate. Discipline turns the key, and the tract society preaches by assortment in bundles. Reduced gentility, the only respectable wretchedness, too proud for the mission, and too helpless to risk solitude, is not forbidden the temple, but fills a corner and enjoys patronage. A smiling or waving welcome is generously paid in condescension. Self-sacrifice a habit, the means of grace are cheap when purchased by obeisance. Abasement, to the proud, is so allied with humility, that the hungry soul is nourished by it and exalted. The old path is pleasant, and the old company solacing, even if trailing behind at a respectful distance. The bruised heart seems most at home with those who know its bruises. Woe of every sort needs a

certain ear to hear it, and will utter itself to such, if but to be pitied. The light of diamonds is most coveted by those who once reigned in its splendor. But for these poor ones are not the ministrations of the beneficed divine adapted. His tones are pitched to the ears of those they beseech, to whom he owes all, and from whom he expects even more. Their courtly presence he has enjoyed till their moral atmosphere has become his own, and his passions flow much in the same currents with theirs. To apply Massillon, 'he is naturally attentive to refrain from every thing calculated to make them melancholy; eager to conciliate their affections, and make them pleased with him; careful to speak to them only the language of peace, confidence, and mercy; and instead of frightening them on account of their sins, encourages them, and in his mildness furnishes them a resource against the secret alarms of conscience.' It were too much to expect him to pass from the gay saloons of fashion and mammon to the

feet of the altar, 'there to pray for himself and his people, there to avert the righteous anger, there to deplore the wickedness of a world he has just applauded, and in which he has taken part, and there to attend upon the holy mysteries with that silence of the senses, that profound recollection, that religious terror, that majestic gravity, and that calmness of heart and mind which are necessary in the spiritual employment of the ministry.'

His discourses are essays to gratify taste, adorned by allusions to pictures and ornaments and usages, which his hearers are just now enjoying; or arguments to qualify and ennoble worldliness, which possesses and invests them; or rhapsodies to solace their indifference to uncertainties and perils, which their busy lives of idleness or occupation give them no time to contemplate. Once a year the golden rule is dwelt upon, to harmonize and conciliate commercial niceties. Refinement and speciousness may display themselves upon

so sober a generality. If not a vague abstraction, it may be only relative in its application to life, as honesty in the common sense is not integrity. Honor is the practicable and necessary rule. The speculator may have it, and trade by it, and reap advantages from it, even if his ingenuous friend be ruined by his scheme. Thief he may morally be, and a beggar his dupe, but the contract must be fulfilled, and justice indorse it. As the ethics to govern in the settlement between man and his Maker, with character only in judgment, the golden rule is unquestionable, but not in the court of the money-changers, where honor alone must gild the edges of promises. With the motives of the heart God may deal. Man must have his due.

Love and mercy, alternating, are the usual and encouraging themes. Conscience, in the very crises of alarm, has its terrors converted into blessings, by believing consciousness of crime an awakening of contrition. The extremity of evil appears the beginning of

forgiveness. A life wasted by vices drops to be caught in the arms of virtue, and winged hopes are given it by mercy it has only outraged. Man is abased and degraded that love and mercy may exalt him. Evil is a possible merit if good is to come of it. The use of man to employ a God. Creature and Creator coöperating. Self-love and the attributes of Deity harmonized.

He is a pretty preacher for young people. His manner moves them like the bursting spring. His similes are of buds and blossoms and fresh verdure. His soft words and gentle gestures winnow fragrance. He expands a flower in advancing to his climax. His blooming virtues inspire goodness, as modest Picciola enforced wisdom. His soft cambric a moment obscures his eyes, as the light snow sometimes conceals the violet; but they get new sweetness from tears, as increased fragrance results from bruising. Young maidens, blooming with innocence and beauty, and lustrous with love of every thing lovable, feel a

flush unmoved before by coarser monitors, and aspire afresh to beatitudes just ready for them. The beautiful world, never so beautiful as painted by the beautiful preacher, dissolves in contemplation, and paradise opens and surrounds them and all—the dear divine in the very midst, as Beatrice appeared in the midst of the great snow-white rose, transfixing her illustrious lover.

His accuracy and variety of taste make him a connoisseur in every thing pertaining to colors and fabrics. At home everywhere where there is elegance, contrasts and harmonies have trained him to refinement of observation, and he is at once the artist and arbiter in perplexity. As a relaxation from labor, and to gather resources for the entertainment and instruction of his people, he has travelled the Old World, and seen edifices and pictures and costumes, and his perception of effects is acute and unerring. His indorsement of the style of a house, or the beauty of a landscape, or the trimming of a gown, is

assurance of grandeur or value or tastefulness. His ethics in the pulpit and æsthetics in the drawing-room are alike acceptable and infallible. His fine sense of fitness was illustrated in the choice of a text for his trial sermon: In my Father's house are many mansions. His novel treatment delighted the cultivated pew-owners, and he was chosen at once, leaving the little matter of salary for himself to determine. Orthodox, by the severest test, as far as he went, his sense of architecture and apportionment was refreshing. The travelled portion of his audience were reminded, by the exterior he drew, of every renowned structure they had seen, and the more exclusive were delighted by his allotments. Delicate he was, and discriminating, to the limit of refinement, but his standard of excellence was not so obscure as not to be sufficiently obvious. Degrees of happiness were determined by development, and that was easy of interpretation. Bliss they had understood before to be relative. Enjoyment, as a rule, is measured by capacity.

Incongruity would mar the pleasure even of heaven. Birds of the same plumage have the same song, and would lose their beauty and melody by ill assortment. If on earth division is difficult and temporary, in heaven it must be inevitable and eternal. Beatitude would be qualified if not immutable. Happiness above must have been defined from the foundation of the world, as continual jostling would unsettle it. If poor bodies, in faded robes, avoid their betters here, arbitrary mixture hereafter would be oppression. The theory of fitness and likes must solve eternal justice and harmony. Then the appointments of the preacher were as tasteful as his apportionment. Every mansion was differently adorned, and earthly upholstery was shamed by his supernal fancy. The mistresses of mansions received new views of furnishing and ornamentation; at the same time they were delighted that in so many things their taste was indorsed. In some details he seemed even to describe their own super-terrestrial habitations. Passing

with his imagination from one blissful compartment to another, they seemed at home in their own parlors and drawing-rooms. Their own gossamer lace curtains, imported by Stewart, the breezes of paradise fluttered in their faces; and their own beautiful velvets caressed their footsteps over coverings, not made by hands, eternal.

In society he is indispensable and charming, and always at ease where angels are sometimes constrained. He pervades and tones the atmosphere like a perfume. His presence harmonizes discords and compounds incompatibles. He contributes of his graces and borrows of its splendors. The gleanings of the week are a resource for Sunday. Like a fish, he gathers food from the living surface; like a drooping flower, he revives in the sunshine; like a wasting soil, he lies fallow for refreshment. Velvet and damask soothe from his brain its fever. His hand, wearied by composition, rests itself by dalliance. His mind is relieved of weighty reflection by

social philosophy. The long mornings are shortened by confidences. His ear an unquestioned receptacle, he knows more of the mysteries of a household than the householder. Receiving of the gushing tenderness of the lambs of his flock, he unconsciously leads them into green pastures. He composes their ambitions or jealousies or fears, and writes them substantially his followers. They are bound by ties of sacredness, and his honor is at once their stay and sacrament. He is indeed the good shepherd, with the indispensable crook and oil, and his protection and consolation are the green thymy nooks of security and promise.

His relations with society are closer than the physician's, and his services more solemn and responsible. With the poor body, for a few days or years, the former has to deal, before following it to the grave; the latter has charge of the imperishable, which he must meet in judgment, and answer for. Every taint upon it will appear distinctly in the

luminous light of the great day, and every one he has given it will glare upon him. If he has soothed the conscience to sleep by noxious sympathy or advice, it will pronounce against him in its terrible awakening. If he has stimulated any corrupting desire, in hunger or remorse it will forever haunt him. If he has concealed any wholesome truth, it will flash upon him retributively at the great uncovering. If he has encouraged a lie, its endless effects will discover themselves in condemnation. If he has pandered to the verge of hypocrisy—invented philosophies to flatter worldliness—confused worship with ceremony —courted power without suggesting responsibility—helped to degrade integrity to the standard of commercial honor—exalted money without regard to the means which obtained it—encouraged wine and denounced drunkenness—extolled prodigality and deplored bankruptcy—admired costly raiment and bewailed demoralization—cautioned youth, with only manhood, against marriage, and warned him

of the strange woman—counselled with ambitious mothers, and inveighed against slander—if all or any of these things he has done, he has debauched his holy office, and the meanest man or woman he has helped to ruin, will forever—happy or wretched—in sorrow or anger—lament that he ever existed.

XIV.

AND SO FORTH.

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Creature-comforts, Jack, more than are wholesome, are the devil. At least, they are the lap of Delilah. They emasculate and smother. Manliness, the thing every man should stand for, grows without them. Strong roots are made by strong winds. Careful culture and supports give symmetry to the shrub in the conservatory, but the oak of commerce grows alone, amid storms. To the rude soil and the tempest it owes its texture, and it will bear the tests of the seas. You have seen how the branches of trees by the coast or on the mountain are sometimes forced by the merciless wind to grow one way; but the wilful roots

combine defiantly and force themselves another. Character is so much resistance and endurance. You remember the indifference of one of our schoolfellows to the freezing November mud, and what a hero he was in the war. Barefooted generally, he was always at the head of his class. His pitiful luncheon at noontime kept him but a minute from his book. He would be a man, and even poverty helped him. If we jeered, it was cautiously. His calm persistency shamed us. His way was his own, and nothing could divert him. He advanced as if fate led and all invisible powers beckoned. The master even, stern as he was, was subordinate, and seemed never happy but in his service. There is nothing more accretive or cumulative than manliness. Every trial gives a new resource, and every conquest a new power. With each achievement accrues a premium. Growth is obvious, and calculable, and applicable. Every one, boy or man, has read Robinson Crusoe, but every one has not thought why the simple narrative is so

interesting. To the curious boy it is the adventures of a man in novel and trying situations; to the thoughtful adult it is the analysis and display of human powers and resources. It is metaphysics illustrated in intellect on trial. In straits we are to see if the solitary man is to survive a hero. Without ordinary helps, he is to supply himself by invention. He masters extremity, and appears noble in achievement. He is exalted without applause or patronage. Humanity is vindicated and sublimated. 'It is a poor and disgraceful thing, not to be able to reply, with some degree of certainty, to the simple questions, What will you be? What will you do?' To cut the cable and launch away from conventional restraints and helps, is the aspiration of every man at some time in life. His individuality feels fettered and shorn. Before he consents to surrender and subordination, he aspires to be tried by trusts, and perils, and calamities. The natural man is radical, and is reluctant to believe his way not the best.

He would show it, and make others walk in it. Quitting the belief that there is something in him more than appears, is the first death. With it is interred his genius. A record of the solemn entombment is made in all the waste places it leaves. The coldest man who has read Alton Locke has felt a certain kinship to the hero. If he despised his theories, his memory was illumined by the lurid light of his enthusiasms. Mournfully were reanimated the aspirations which spent themselves upon restraints which at one time encaged him. True manhood is shy of conventionality and patronage. It is self-asserting, and is rarely arm-in-arm, but for recreation. It gives and takes of its own will. It husbands by determining without counsel. Its reserve conciliates what it may appropriate. The average it can drop to when not avoidable, and as readily rise out of when not indispensable. It is democratic, essentially. It requires and permits, alike. While it chooses, it gives choice, without question.

Freedom it claims and allows, an immunity without gyves. A receptacle, it can wait to receive, and would not obstruct nor be obstructed. A week were not idle if it brought something, but a day would be wasted if employed upon nothings. Its freedom is its strength, which modish subserviency acknowledges in obeisance. Its faculties are fitted for work by waiting for work worthy of them. Friction it likes, but not machine movement. The principles it would train to grooves are as virginal and unpolished as when spoken of God. True pleasure betrays the same shyness and freedom. It is not to be caught and kept by arbitrary provision. Mansions, curtained by clouds, carpeted by woven sunbeams, perfumed by essences of every thing fragrant, filled by loveliest maidens on earth, could not lure it to stay forever. It would flutter unbidden into the terrestrial paradise, and fly away as wilfully into an attic, where only a desolate heart awaited it. While its angel-like presence in the brilliant

saloon would be accepted the contribution of a natural guest, its visitation to the skyward chamber would be a gift of Heaven, an answer to despairing prayer, a compensation for all the unnumbered woes of a solitary human soul.—Men generally are as indolent as they can afford to be. Unless compelled, they do little which is useful, and utility is the crown of labor. Only now and then a high nature is created which works from love, and is content with a tithe of the harvest. Nine parts to mankind is a generous division, and only a great soul will spare so much. To such it is not a sacrifice; his return is in multiplied blessings. Exemption from useful labor is the ambition or boast of nearly all. Trifling for selfish ends is therefore the business of most of those who can confine themselves to voluntary effort. They are perverted by a misuse of means. They rely upon the adventitious, till the natural intrinsic resources deny them service. They go out of themselves for pleasure, and return to find themselves empty.

They build palaces, and exist in them the victims of ceremony and servants. They buy books to adorn libraries, which satirize them. They buy pianos as ambitious ornaments, and patronize the opera. They educate their daughters expensively, and see them accept impertinence and imbecility for escorts and husbands. Their sons are indulged and pampered, till amusements are exhausted and occupation is purchased, to keep them respectable. They ride in carriages so conspicuously elegant as to make them sacrifice comfort to propriety. Their horses represent so much capital that the weather and their health are consulted before using them. Their acquaintances are esteemed for the rank they have and give. Their houses are heated by furnaces to secure a uniform temperature, and day and night they inhale a baked atmosphere, and wonder at disturbed respiration. Pipes conduct cold and warm water into chambers and kitchen, and they take poison in all they drink and eat, and are surprised

by palsy and the increase of nervous disorders. The wine-cellar, meant to be a depository of luxuries, becomes a resource against wasting vitality. The laugh of the fields and the streets is reproduced in ghastly caricature behind the vari-colored goblets. A joke upon the high price of bread redeems a dullard, and the whole table from dulness. The children are cared for by nurses, and their natures modified by restraints and drugs, till feebleness and pitiful cries identify them. The doctor's visits are as indispensable as the baker's or hair-dresser's, and the household eat as they dose, by prescription. The priest drops in to solace the moments between drugging and dressing. Life is taken up by the endless round of artificialities and their effects, till the struggles and wants of the million they deplore compare with them as blessings.—The inspiration of work is the spirit of life. Bread for the body, earned by the hardest, is ambrosia for the soul. Sweet for the sweat it costs, it is sweeter for the promise it gives. It satisfies

the appetite, but not the longing insatiable. The little feast is but a foretaste of fruition. The sickly atmosphere of affluence, tempered to tender throats and low enunciation, is gathered from cellars bordered by sewers, and would choke a healthy nature, exhausted and exhaustive by exertion. The great lungs of out-door labor inspire the upper air of heaven, and pant for inspirations from its source. To-morrow, on the way with the sun, will demand a full day's service, which to-day's fidelity must assure. To-morrow and to-morrow, and then the day supernal, long enough for any longing, an unending harvest and holiday.—Making and earning money are different. Earning it is a reality; making it a fiction. Money makes money; labor earns it. Bonds, proverbially, like infants, do best by sleeping; labor must be wide awake, and faithful. A dollar, for ten hours in the sun, is precious; a dollar, got in the dark, which cannot be accounted for, is worse than want. Knotted hands tell of the one; nimbleness

or nothing tells of the other.—We exalt and reverence the poet; but a machine built from the ore of the mountain is as much a creation as an epic, and fills the imagination of the builder with poetic glories. Who sings an immortal song may be jealous of the fame of him who trains the elements to pointing pins and sailing steamships. Who has gone down, down among the machinery of the Great Eastern, and not felt a contempt for his buying and selling and pleasuring occupations? Transfixed in the presence of tremendous power, the genius which discovered and tamed and trained it, loomed in transfiguration, and confused his memories of even Niagara and Yo-Semite. The mastery of the engines over the powers of the sea, overcame his arithmetic, and his bonds and ledgers burnt in the blaze of divinity. The slender crank which rules the waves, appeared to his feeble sense the fiat of Omnipotence.—Power is restful and invisible. It slivers the oak, and the splintered column is a memorial. The fragrant

wood is untainted by the mighty fluid, and smells not of experiment or spent forces. It rives the rock, and its fissured inscriptions Old Mortality may never deepen. Granite is blasted by gunpowder; millstones are quarried by a gentler but mightier agent. Wedges of dry wood are inserted, and water poured upon them. Over night they swell, and the precious rocks separate, noiselessly as death treads, free of any treacherous seam, and night and day, for years, like the mills of God, they grind exceeding fine. Gray wrought silently and patiently for a thousand days upon a thousand words, and his matchless Elegy will be the expression of tenderness while any tongue is left to utter it, and will remain in memory when human tongues are silent and superfluous. Goldsmith, hungry and bailiff-hunted, in naked and desolate chambers, nursed through all the years of his prime, through all the sacred watches of consciousness, through the wasting agonies of waiting and depression, through the rare and rapturous moments of exalta-

tion, his little romance of humanity, and would not let it go till bread, remorseless bread, demanded it. In the silent womb of profound human nature it was nourished by tears and shaped by aspirations, and its birth was an epoch in life and literature. The tawdry in book-making has ever since been cautious of flaunting its meretricious arts, and the simple Vicar is accepted a model in narrative, and an encouragement to the pure humanity it describes.—Simple nature is strongest, as simple work is healthiest. Whirled in every little eddy, it would be weakened or wasted by purposeless motion, and would forget the inspiration of currents. It would be fretted by the incidents of progress, and lose consciousness of destination. Will, even, is perishable, if not in exercise. Purpose alone will nourish and exalt it. Amusements give it but a sickly growth, if they do not destroy it. Mere living is not a worthy object of life. True life is above the means which sustain it. Equanimity has an eye to results beyond the mo-

ment. Only the beasts that perish are content to be merely fed. Accessaries are not the purpose of a living picture, much less of life. The nervous tread of a true man means more than movement; it betrays absorbment, and looks to an end worth attaining. Idleness has every gait, and none long. Whim changes it. Nothing to do is the worst want of nature, and the most exhausting. It tests severely the best minds and morals. Ennui is weariness which has nothing to show. The tired hodman counts the courses in the wall. Languor presses its nose against the pane, and dreamily questions the vitality it muses on and envies. Earned leisure is most relished. Pure joy is a costly article. Diamonds are worn outside; jewels more brilliant beam within. A little time for pleasure is precious; time for nothing else is burdensome. Accessaries contribute to happiness, but do not create it. The good goddess is jealous, and shy of rivals. She is reluctant to obtrude where gold and silver images are set up and worshipped in her

stead. Her nature and movements are free, her robes flowing, and she requires room, and a generous welcome.—Job, by virtue of his celibacy, is confined to no social set, and his opportunities for observation sometimes make him an authority. In one night he met three companies, made up of as many grades, as they are called, of society. The first was composed of persons who begin their labors with the sun, and seven o'clock was the early hour of meeting. The ladies were cheerful in simplicity and health and plain dresses, and plain cake and walnuts were the refreshments. The second was gathered from a class of greater pretensions and privileges, and met at the more respectable hour of nine. The ladies and gentlemen were more elaborately dressed, but, by constraint and anxiety of manner, betrayed uneasiness of position. The wine was tasted and discussed in a way which betrayed that it was not an accustomed beverage. The third assemblage was of the cream of the town, and was arriving and departing in state

carriages all the time from ten till early morning. The ladies' dresses were so marvellous in novelty and texture and brilliancy, as to engross attention, and make the poor bodies in them pitiable. The costly refreshments were served by imported servants, undistinguishable from guests in dress, manners, or language. Job is a ready and adaptable fellow, and enjoyed each; but the first, he says, over the plate of walnuts and gingerbread, incomparably most.—Simple, open natures, the light streams through. They are known and read of all men. They are individual, and never mistaken. They stand for ideas, and facts, and deeds. Rectitude identifies them; 'celebrated not by cries of joy, but by serenity, which is joy fixed or habitual.' The extrinsic is their foreground; the inherent their perspective, illimitable. Trial quickens and refines them. Wants supply and pangs console them. Calamities become resources, treasures which do not waste, entailed for precious uses, perpetuated in goodness, or fame, or glory.

A poor mother, whom the care of an afflicted child has hurried to the grave, is crowned for her virtues where there is no suffering. Suffering little Charlotte Brontë, on her knee, by the firelight, in the cold parsonage, in painful characters, wrote herself into immortal narrative. Through all the rapture and agony of De Quincey's sublime and terrible Confessions, is heard the wail and cough of poor Ann. Milton, in the solitude of mortal darkness, with an eye strong enough to pierce the sun and rend the veil, saw the invisible and eternal, and painted them in shadows and glories unfading and immortal.

XV.

OUT OF THE WINDOW.

XV.

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A GREAT city has a certain look of repose, but it is the repose of power. A million of people so crowded together as to be waked by the report of a columbiad, must of necessity be self-possessed, occupied, and in earnest. A hundred hands are in waiting for the contents of a pocket. Every one must ever be busy and on his guard or he will starve or be robbed. To look at the million-headed thing, you would think it abstracted or indifferent; but such a convolution of sensations and sensibilities—want, plethora, jealousy, pride, ambition, hatred, conscious crime, despair—is a congeries of activities the slightest

accident may agitate into a tumult. Its face may dimple at an inharmonious combination of colors in a lady's attire, and a moment afterward it will see the grotesquest of all things without a smile. At one time it will risk its security to avenge a slight, at another endure oppression without a whimper. A man dead in the street may not much more apparently attract its attention than a dead omnibus-horse. One person stopping to ask after the unfortunate man would excuse another to do the same, and the street would be blocked. His curiosity, if he has any, must be stayed till he gets the evening paper with his tea. Nevertheless, every novelty in every shop window is observed, and an aged woman or careless child cannot cross the dangerous street without fastening anxiously every eye. Let the prodigious mass alone, and it will walk round you; get in its way, and it will close upon you forever.

In times of civil distress and extremity it most conspicuously displays its shrewdness and

power. When the nation is stirred, the material long buried and unrecognized works upward. The burdens put upon it make it active, nervous, and irrepressible. A victory or a defeat immediately employs all hands making figures. The blunder of an incompetent commander, and the tempest which scatters a fleet, are shrewdly and sagaciously discounted. The dealers in old clothes, decaying vegetables, poisoned drinks, and the precious metals, have profound theories, which make the schemes of the finance minister tremble and reel. The Sixth Ward and Wall Street agree, without consultation. They see in the diversion of vast numbers of able-bodied men into a new and wasting occupation, that the proportion between those who produce and those who consume must be violently affected. They know humanity, its necessities, and its instincts, and scent speculation insensibly. They accept inflation as the inevitable compensation. They know that with the government for customer, necessitated to buy all the country's surplus,

all they have to do is to mark every thing up, and let the certain results follow. They know that man, so essentially by taste, habit, and necessity, a getting animal, will not neglect so tempting an opportunity to combine against his only customer. A falling stone goes not more directly toward the centre of the earth than the instinct of a trading cit goes to the marrow of a money question.

The weakness and power of society are exhibited in averages. It reposes in them, and is developed by them. Its classifications, apparently voluntary, are remorseless. All elements must come under control, and be solved. What is not fit for a square hole, must go into a round. Men are classified as trees, and individuals are apparently as alike as the leaves. Heads are so much on a level, that one above the rest is an obstruction. If a quiet blow will reduce it, down it goes. If it will not down, it is out of its grade, and must go into a higher. 'To live alone, is the chastisement of whoever will raise himself too

high.' What one knows, all are understood to know. Weaknesses and interests are accommodated. No one has great advantages over another. What affects one, affects all. Protection to the individual is protection to the class. Plans he could not originate are ready made. The flow of his life is in a common channel. The full volume and steady current satisfy his efforts, and in the chances of movement float him momentarily to the top. Happy or wretched, he can touch a thousand like him. The best and worst of every thing are at hand, and contiguous. The virtues and vices are organized, and recruiting. The great town is the greatest, and he is a part of it. Helping to make it, he does something, and will not have lived in vain. He does not see how, but he would be missed. He expands with the bigness about him. The great assemblage makes him decorous. His conduct disgraces or dignifies it. He dresses to be always presentable to it. It keeps a guard over him while he sleeps and knows his

footsteps when awake. The streets are lit for him. The parks are planted for him. The harbor is broader for his eye. An opera he may hear at the Academy for a guinea, or at the cathedral for a shilling. Church privileges are purchasable or acceptable, at his will. The cemetery, where they bury in tombs and trenches, is one of his possessions. All are his as much as anybody's, and his without exciting anybody's envy or cupidity. Each illustrates the fable of the swimming apples, and applies it to the rest. The little instincts become so marvellously acute, that they assume the dignity of faculties. The faculties are so habitually in use, that they have the look of instincts. In the club, dulness becomes respectable. In the town meeting, the best heads are in the audience. In the exchange, audacity is wisdom. Wisdom itself is too dumb for an oracle. The street a man lives in fixes his social status. A man, good or great as he may be, is not great or good enough to make his rank. A house on

the avenue, a box at the opera, a pew in the church, an establishment for the park, are indices not to be gainsayed. Neither intelligence, nor taste, nor virtue, is requisite to possess them. Money, attainable by the worst as well as by the best, and by the worst means, secures them. Neither intellect nor purity is permitted advantages. Distinctions of God were obstructions to men. The standard is determined by possibility. It is the highest attainable by the majority. The universal hat is lifted in condescension and recognition.

The average wisdom controls society. Presidents and assemblies and kings are its creatures, or exist by its sufferance. It is the gauge of civilization. It may appear too slow to the seer, or too fast for the philosopher, but the prescience of the one and timidity of the other are not often consulted. It gives a sympathizing ear to the fervid thoughts of reformers and enthusiasts, cooling and utilizing them by diffusion. It takes from the wearied eye and nerve-shaken hand of the

inventor his invention, and puts it to work in the fields and seas. It may have its whimsicalities, but they are the recreations and gambols of power. So generally and intensely preoccupied and absorbed by its occupations, it is but natural that sometimes a little child should lead it. Engaged in emancipating races, it finds time to fill the shop-windows with caricatures of the grotesque side of the tremendous process. The few, consciously strong or presumptuous, who have been helped upward by its generosity, may fret that it will not always continue to aid and elevate them. The roominess and freedom above are in such contrast with the jostling and competition below, that they cry out for prerogatives. Democracy is good while its uses can be turned to account, but when independence of it is sought and fails, it is complained of as agrarian. Its favoritism is fickle and qualified. It delights to scatter its gifts, and limit their tenure to subordination. Individuals may be its favorites until they assume to be,

when they are not. The rights it would secure to each are not incompatible with the rights of any. It aims to elevate every citizen; not so much for personal benefit as for public use. It designs opportunity to all, rather than advantages to any. It means that every man shall have a fair chance to make his own way. Scholarship is not the end; but peaceful and enlightened society, governed by humane and beneficent laws.

Demonstrations which sometimes appear revolutionary and suicidal, prove but detective police movements for self-preservation. Masses sometimes seem infatuated by dangerous demagogues until thoroughly made acquainted with their designs, when the mischief is exposed, and the mischief-makers are overwhelmed. The ready attention given to ambitious factionists beguiles them to ruin. If the public ear can be so easily had, why not its strong right hand, with a dagger in it? Thousands are got to subscribe a compact of defiance of authority, and the leaders in the

scheme of treason are confident of its success. The roll of names attains an immeasurable length, and the time for indiscriminate slaughter of loyalty arrives. The signal agreed upon and perfectly understood is given, when the whole devilish plot appears a failure to its inventors. Those enrolled to participate in the parricidal crime, expose and identify their leaders, join in exultation at their disgrace and ruin, and a purer patriotism is established. Desperate disorganizers misinterpret public impatience. Their own hearts corrupted, and bent upon disruption and revolution, they assume as much perfidy and baseness in those who listen to and seem to sympathize with them. Popular discontent cannot easily be organized into revolt. An attempt to organize it, while a particle of gratitude or hope remains, will only quicken a remembrance of benefits, and warm the common heart to a more fervid attachment. Once put upon its guard, no temptation can seduce it.

In the natural tendency of society to average itself is manifested its security and promise. It is the common sense and the common law of life. It governs the Government, and every man. It is the spirit of democracy. American civilization is its best fruit. There the rulers are citizens, and every citizen is a possible ruler. It puts a hope into every heart, and helps it to pray as well as to work. It fosters ideas of progression, which grow into system, and methodize thought and exertion. It makes tests for creeds and platforms, and widens their scope and purpose to a generous breadth and humanity. Sects and parties must consult it, or fall apart. In its providence, it cares for all, the little and the great, the strong and the feeble. Its modes may appear levelling processes, but the valleys of shadow are lifted up. The sun, if it does not glitter upon a promontory, warms the plain to produce a generous harvest. If genius be a little crippled in its wing, it is to teach it a steadier flight. If

the beauty and grandeur of the everlasting hills be a little obscured by cultivation, the royal vintage will make glad the heart of man.

THE END.

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